

COUNTERFEIT CONFEDERATES P. 50 A PINT-SIZED HERO P. 12

THE CIVIL WAR MONITOR

VOL. 10,
NO. 3

Wounded Warriors

For thousands of injured or
infirm Union soldiers,
the Invalid Corps provided
a means to extend their
military service.

Not all of them were grateful
for the opportunity.

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HOMEFONT P. 61

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HONORING OUR HEROES



USMC Ret. Master Gunnery Sergeant Bob Verell takes a moment to honor those commemorated on the replica Vietnam Memorial Wall.
Photo by Thomas Wells

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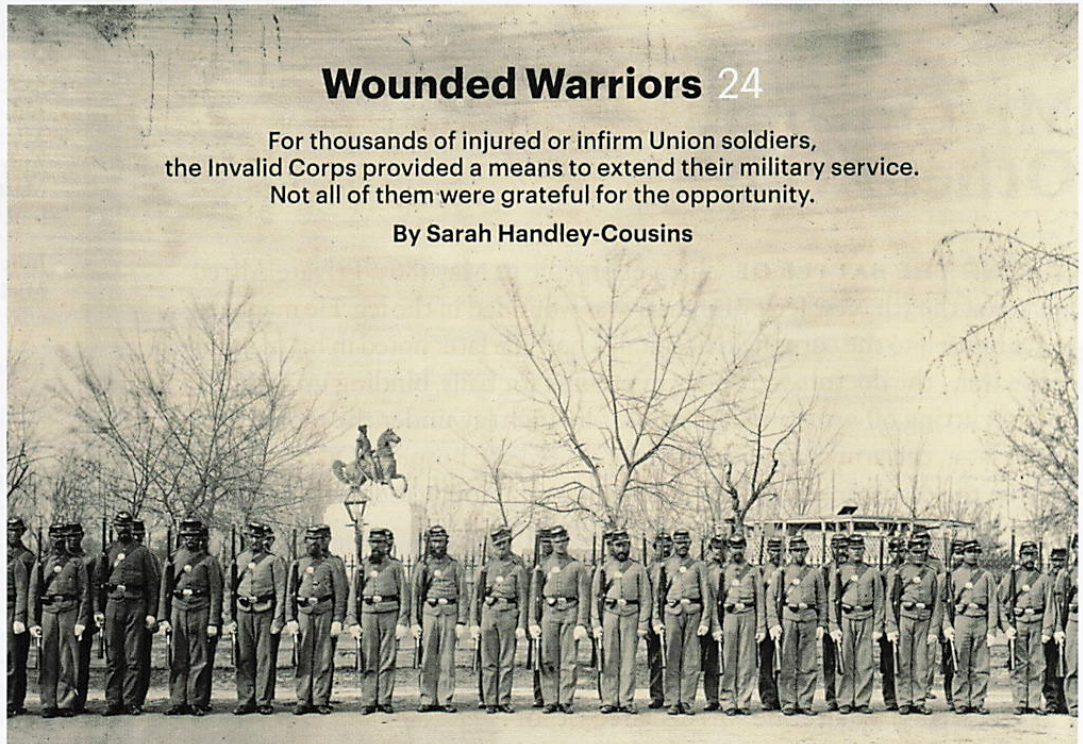
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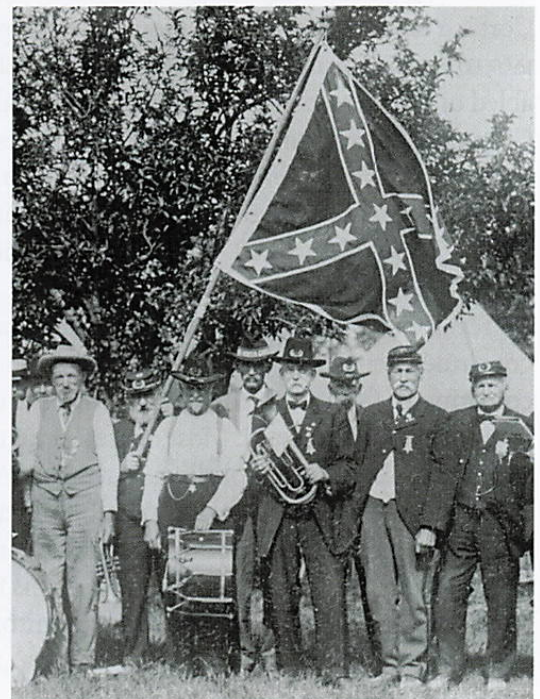
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By Adam H. Domby



ON THE COVER:

Two members of the Invalid Corps. Image courtesy of the Library of Congress. Colorized by Mads Madsen of Colorized History.

Mr. Lincoln's Other Army

DURING THE BATTLE OF Chancellorsville in May 1863, Private Alfred Bellard of the 5th New Jersey Infantry was wounded in the leg. He managed to get himself to the corps field hospital, where, he later noted in his memoir of the war, “the doctors were busy in probing for balls, binding up wounds, and in cutting off arms and legs, a pile of which lay under the table.” Two weeks later, the army’s medical director visited the hospital. On coming to Bellard, the officer inspected his injury and said, “Young man, you have had a very narrow escape, as a quarter of an inch further to the right, you would have bled to death, and a quarter of an inch to the left, your leg would have had to come off.” Bellard’s response: “I considered myself a lucky dog.”

Later that year, after he was declared fit for light duty, Bellard was assigned to the Invalid Corps, a unit created in the Union army in April 1863 to extend the military service of partially disabled or infirm soldiers. Members of the Invalid Corps mostly performed non-combatant roles—from guarding prisoners to serving as cooks to assisting in hospitals—thereby freeing their able-bodied comrades to serve on the front lines. By war’s end, some 60,000 soldiers had served in the Invalid Corps, renamed the Veteran Reserve Corps in 1864.

Yet not all of the corps’ soldiers were thankful for the opportunity to continue their service. Some yearned to be sent home; others wanted to continue to fight with their original regiments, alongside the men with whom they had enlisted. Most chafed at being referred to as “invalids.” As Sarah Handley-Cousins outlines in this issue’s cover story, “Wounded Warriors” (page 24), the Invalid Corps, while created with noble intent, proved in many ways to be a source of frustration for the men who served in it.

Want to share your thoughts about this or other articles in this issue? Send your emails to letters@civilwarmonitor.com.

Terry Johnston

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: LETTERS@CIVILWARMONITOR.COM

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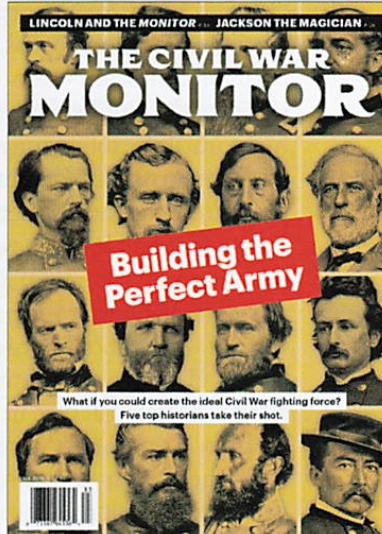
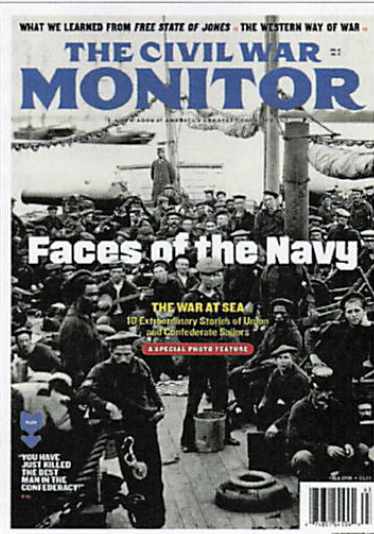
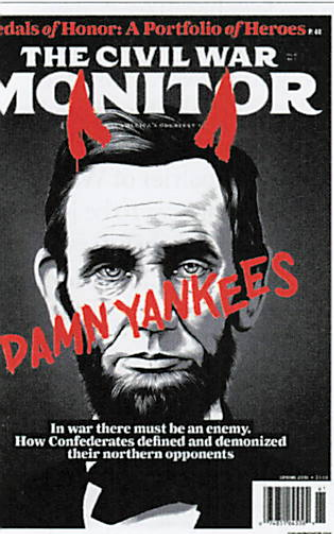
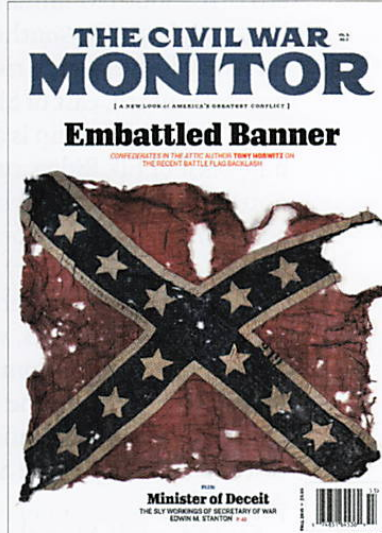
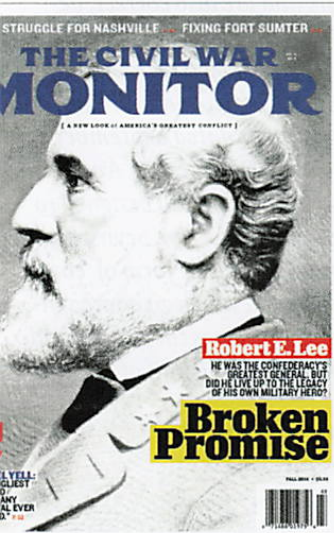
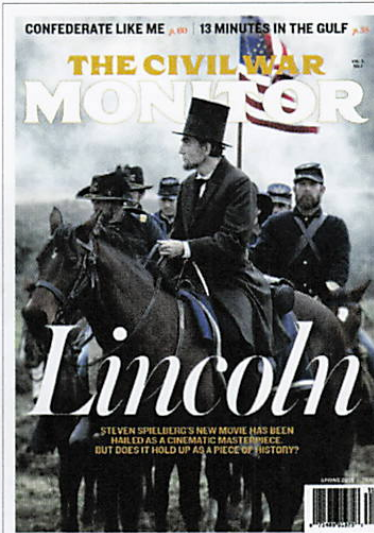
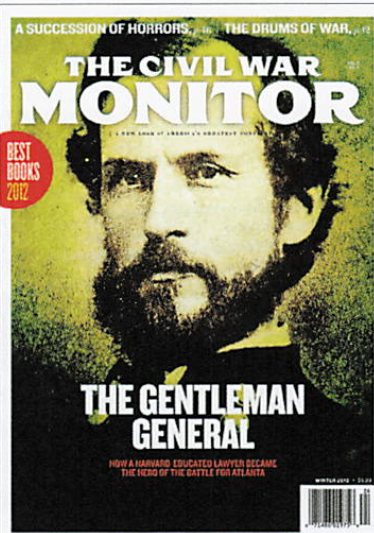
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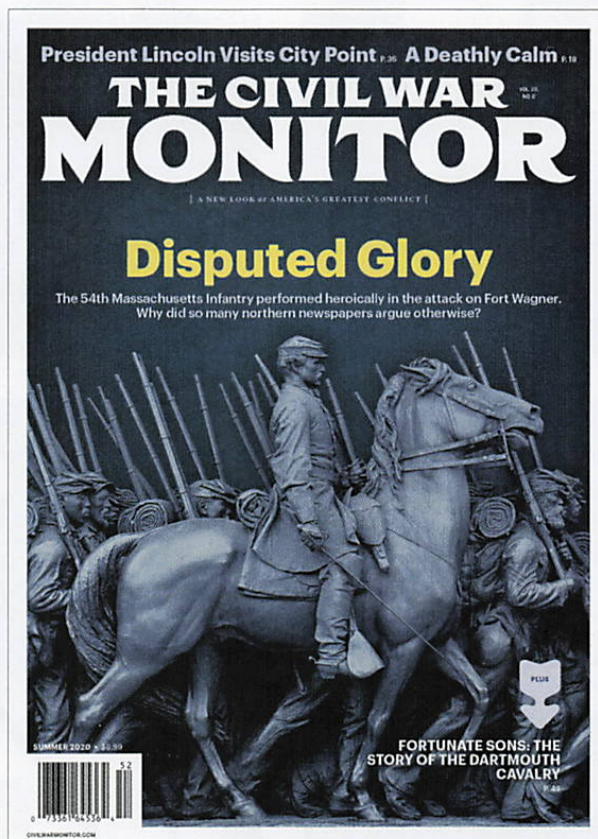
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FORTUNATE SONS

William Marvel wrote a very informative article about the Dartmouth Cavalry in the Summer issue ["Fortunate Sons," Vol. 10, No. 2] but I would like to make a couple of minor corrections that do not take away from the rest of his work. Marvel states that Maryland Heights was the southern tip of South Mountain. Maryland Heights is the southern tip of Elk Ridge, which rises a few miles north, east of Sharpsburg. South Mountain is a few miles east of Elk Ridge, running northeast through Maryland and Pennsylvania and forming the eastern boundary of the Hagerstown and Cumberland Valley. Loudon Heights, which is directly across the Potomac from Maryland Heights, is the beginning of the Blue Ridge and the eastern boundary of the Shenandoah Valley.

Second, while Marvel refers to James Longstreet's corps and Stonewall Jackson's corps, the corps organization was not instituted by the Confederate government until the following month, after the Army of Northern Virginia's retreat from Antietam and Longstreet and Jackson were both promoted to the rank of lieutenant general. During the period Marvel writes about in his article, both had charge of "commands," a quasi-corps structure in which division assignments were not permanent. Marvel also mentions that three divisions—those of Lafayette McLaws, Richard Anderson, and John B. Walker—were detached from Longstreet's corps for the investment of Harpers Ferry. Actually, as Joseph Harsh writes in his book *Taken at the*



Flood, all three of those commanders, along with D.H. Hill, were kept in independent command, reporting directly to Robert E. Lee, until the October corps assignments. Harsh conjectures that Lee was not entirely satisfied with the "two command" arrangement and was testing those commanders for possible "third corps" command. None of them performed to his satisfaction during the Antietam Campaign.

I had these misconceptions in the past myself and realize others may have them as well. Thank you for a very informative article and an excellent magazine.

Duane Carrell
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Ed. *Thanks for your letter, Duane. We asked William Marvel if he'd like*

to respond. He writes: "Mr. Carrell is right on both counts. Having once climbed the southern extremity of South Mountain and watched eagles soaring over Elk Ridge, on the far side of Pleasant Valley, I'm surprised not only that I confused the two but that I didn't catch the mistake through several proofreadings. The details he offers on corps structure in the Army of Northern Virginia are also correct, despite Official Records references to the 'corps' of Longstreet and Jackson as early as Second Bull Run, and 'corps' returns dated September 22, 1862, that show McLaws, Anderson, Walker, and D.H. Hill assigned to Longstreet or Jackson. Stylistically, however, the generic form of 'corps' still strikes me as a legitimate synonym for the wings they commanded from the second half of August."

WELCOME BACK, STEPHEN BERRY!

I can't tell you how pleased I was to see Stephen Berry's new column in the *Monitor's* Summer issue ["Fighting Words: Skedaddle," Vol. 10, No. 2]. I loved reading his previous column in the magazine ["Casualties of War"], and this one promises to be just as interesting and insightful.

Carol Monroe
VIA EMAIL

What a tremendous addition to *The Civil War Monitor*, this new word treatment column from Stephen Berry. Icing on the cake of another great edition of more enjoyable reading.

I really hope it doesn't send him off half-cocked, but I would hope Berry maintains his histori-



Letters to the editor: email us at letters@civilwarmonitor.com or write to The Civil War Monitor, P.O. Box 428, Longport, NJ 08403.

cal integrity and never gets filled with all the malarkey so often associated with Civil War history.

Eli Beachy
VALLEY VIEW, OHIO

PLAY BALL!

Thanks for the Voices quote about Brigadier General George Lucas Hartsuff playing baseball with the troops ["Voices: Camp Sports," Vol. 10, No. 2]. My Union ancestor served with Hartsuff during the engagement that secured Fort Pickens, Florida, at the beginning of the war.

Ironically, perhaps, that Hartsuff, after having survived Antietam (among other battles), died in 1874 of pneumonia, a condition exacerbated by a chest wound he had suffered during the Third Seminole War, a conflict fought prior to our nation's greatest time of trial.

Keep up the good work!

Edward Keller
CENTRAL ISLIP, NEW YORK

ABOUT THAT MAP ...

While I applaud the work that Damian Shiels is doing with Civil War pensions ["Figures: The Civil War's Long Reach," Vol. 10, No. 2], I question the use of a modern map of Europe to illustrate the trans-Atlantic distribution of dependent pensioners. Doing so minimizes the true geographic extent of pensioners because the Austria and Germany that exist today are nowhere near the size they were in 1883. Poland, for one, did not exist in 1883 and was subsumed for the most part by the German Empire, and to a lesser extent the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian Empire. Prussia existed as the core of the German Empire, yet none of its territory appears on the map because in 2020 it is within Poland and Russia. Similarly, Croats, Serbians, and other southern Slavic peoples who

later formed the now defunct Yugoslavia participated in the American Civil War, but when it was fought they were subjects of the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph who ruled over the entire southern half of the Balkans. The same was also true of Hungary, which rebelled against Austrian rule in 1848 and officially became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1867 after Austria was defeated by Prussia in 1866.

The political boundaries of central Europe were a mess in the second half of the 19th century, and it does not do Civil War historians any good to omit from the narrative Poles, Hungarians, and a dozen other ethnic nationalities based on application of a modern map to a historical problem.

David Paul Davenport
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

Ed. *Thanks for your feedback, David. You're right—the shifting territorial boundaries in late-19th century Europe are complicated. We—not Damian Shiels—made the decision to simplify things by using a modern-day map. While imperfect, we believe doing so still gives readers a very good sense of the impact the Civil War had across the Atlantic.*

OOPS!

I have been interested in anything associated with the Civil War since I was very young. I enjoy reading books and magazine articles, as well as in-person visits to sites, battlefields, and museums. I am enjoying the current issue [Vol. 10, No. 2] of the *Monitor*, especially the articles about the 54th Massachusetts Infantry ["Disputed Glory" by Glenn David Brasher] and Abraham Lincoln's 1864 call on City Point ["Mission to the James" by Noah Andre Trudeau].

I did find two minor errors in the issue. The caption on page 33 appears

to have an error regarding the date. It references an issue of *Harper's Weekly* from 1862, when I believe it should be 1863. On page 47, the caption states the presidential party has dinner at Point of Rocks, Maryland (a place on the Potomac River). The group probably dined at Point of Rocks, Virginia, on the Appomattox River.

Joseph McArthur
KENT, WASHINGTON

Ed. *Thanks for the kind words, Joseph—and the keen eye! You're correct on both counts. The illustration from Harper's Weekly on p. 33 was from 1863, not 1862 as mentioned in the caption, and Lincoln and his party dined at Point of Rocks, Virginia. Our apologies for the errors.*

LEE A TRAITOR?

I'm writing to answer the question Joseph McKeown posed in his recent letter to the editor ["Dispatches," Vol. 10, No. 2] concerning Robert E. Lee's status as a traitor to the United States of America. McKeown mused about whether Lee should be considered a traitor—and if he should be, why George Washington wouldn't also be "despised" for having taken up arms against Great Britain during the American Revolution. I don't know if Washington should be despised for betraying Great Britain, but he very well could be seen as a traitor to the crown. Like Washington, Lee also took an oath—though not to protect Virginia, but to the United States of America. Lee betrayed this oath to fight a rebellious war against the same government that gave him an education at West Point and an opportunity to become the man he was, all for a cause that Ulysses S. Grant would call "one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse."

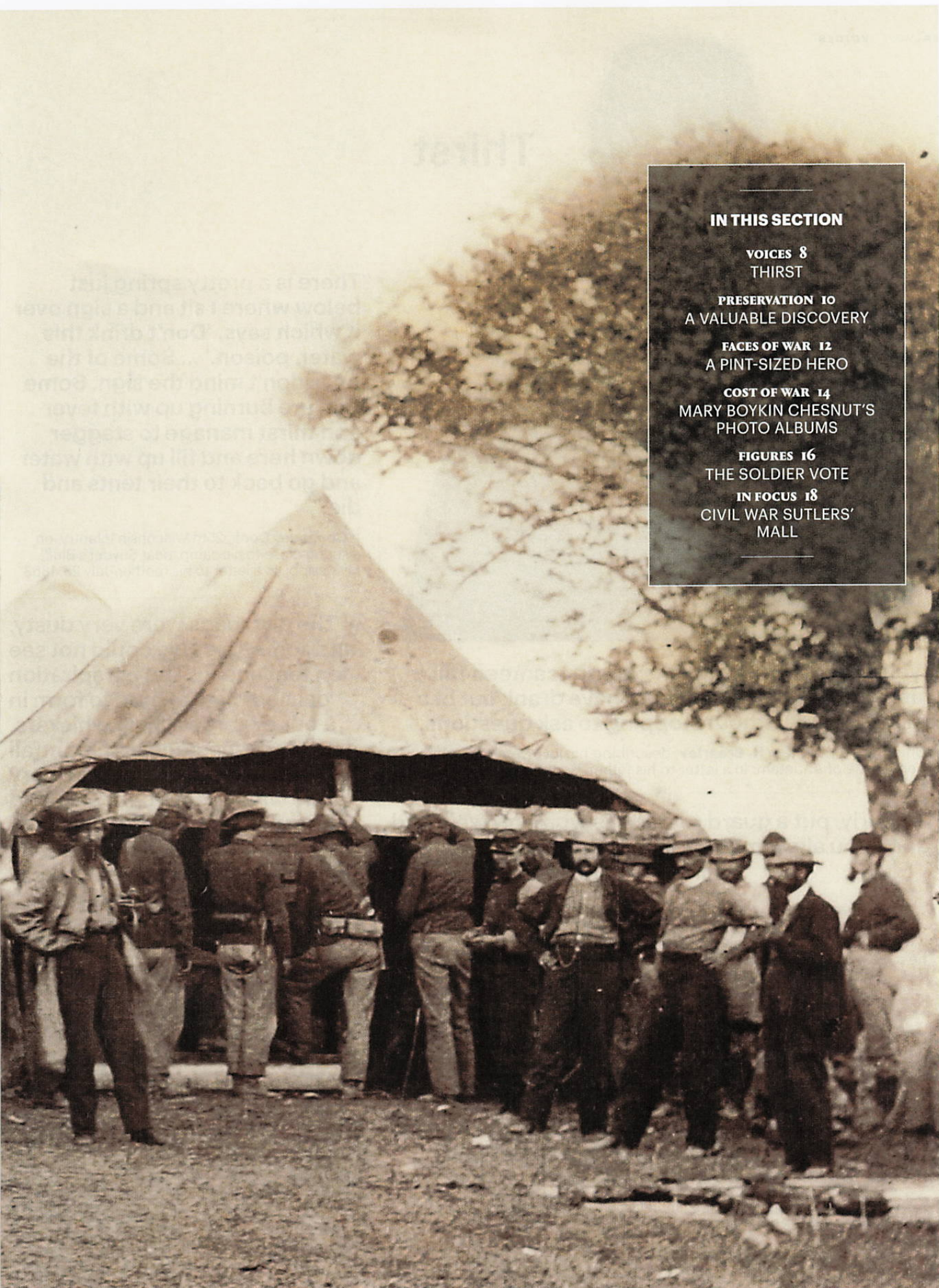
Joey Viola
MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

Salvo

Facts, Figures & Items of Interest



Parched Union soldiers wait to fill their canteens at a well near Fredericksburg, Virginia, in May 1864. For more on thirst among the troops, turn the page. ►



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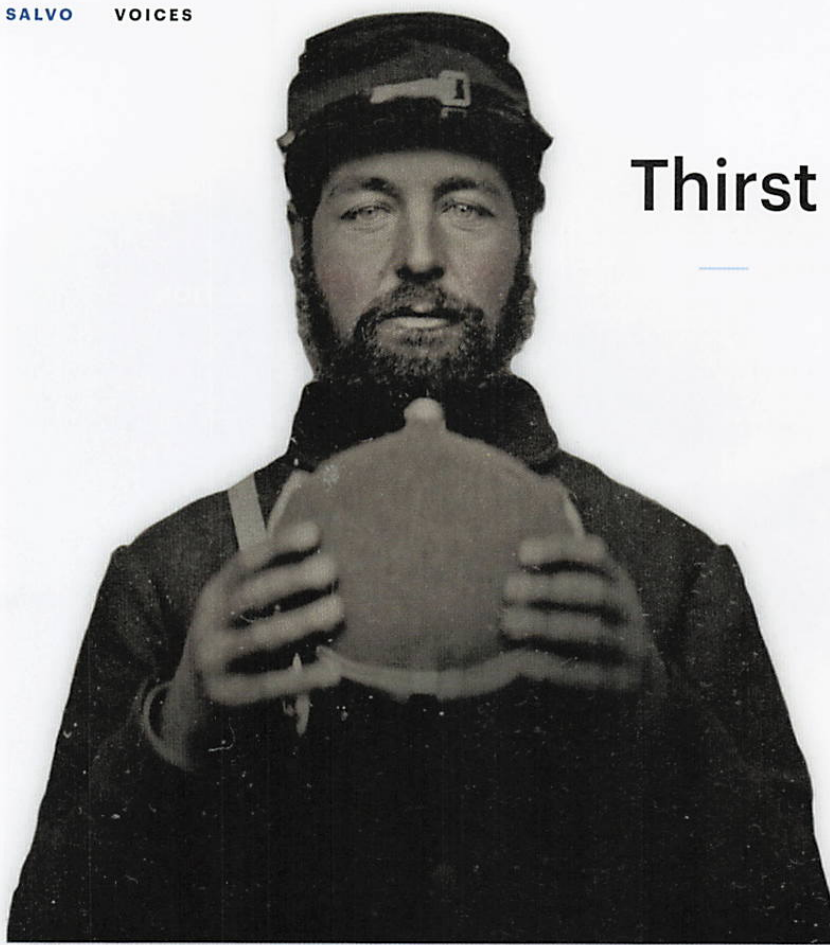
MARY BOYKIN CHESNUT'S
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CIVIL WAR SUTLERS'
MALL



Thirst

"If you ever go into battle, have your canteen full. I was so dry at one time I could have drank out of a mud puddle—without stopping to ask questions."

—Union soldier **William H. Brearley**, describing his involvement in the recent Battle of Antietam, in a letter to his father, September 26, 1862

"Orderly, put a guard round this woman's well, and don't you allow man, woman or child to come near it till every soldier has had all the water he wants."

—**Elvira J. Powers**, a nurse stationed in Nashville, Tennessee, on the reported response of Brigadier General Eleazer A. Paine to a civilian who had insisted he put a guard around her well so that his soldiers wouldn't "drink it all dry" as they marched past her house, in her diary, October 12, 1864

"A friend ... told me that on going to a spring ... to get some water for a wounded Federal, he was shocked to see three dead Federals, lying with their heads in the spring. They had doubtless dragged themselves there to slake their thirst, and breathed their last while thinking of their far-off homes. Tales such as these fill me with dismay."

—Nurse **Kate Cumming**, on an incident relayed to her from the Battle of Shiloh, in her journal, April 13, 1862

SOURCES: BELL I. WILEY, *THE LIFE OF BILLY YANK* (1952); *HOSPITAL PENCILINGS* (1866); *THE PRIVATIONS OF A PRIVATE* (1905); *SOLDIER BOY'S LETTERS TO HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, 1861-65* (1915); *GLEANINGS FROM SOUTHLAND* (1895).

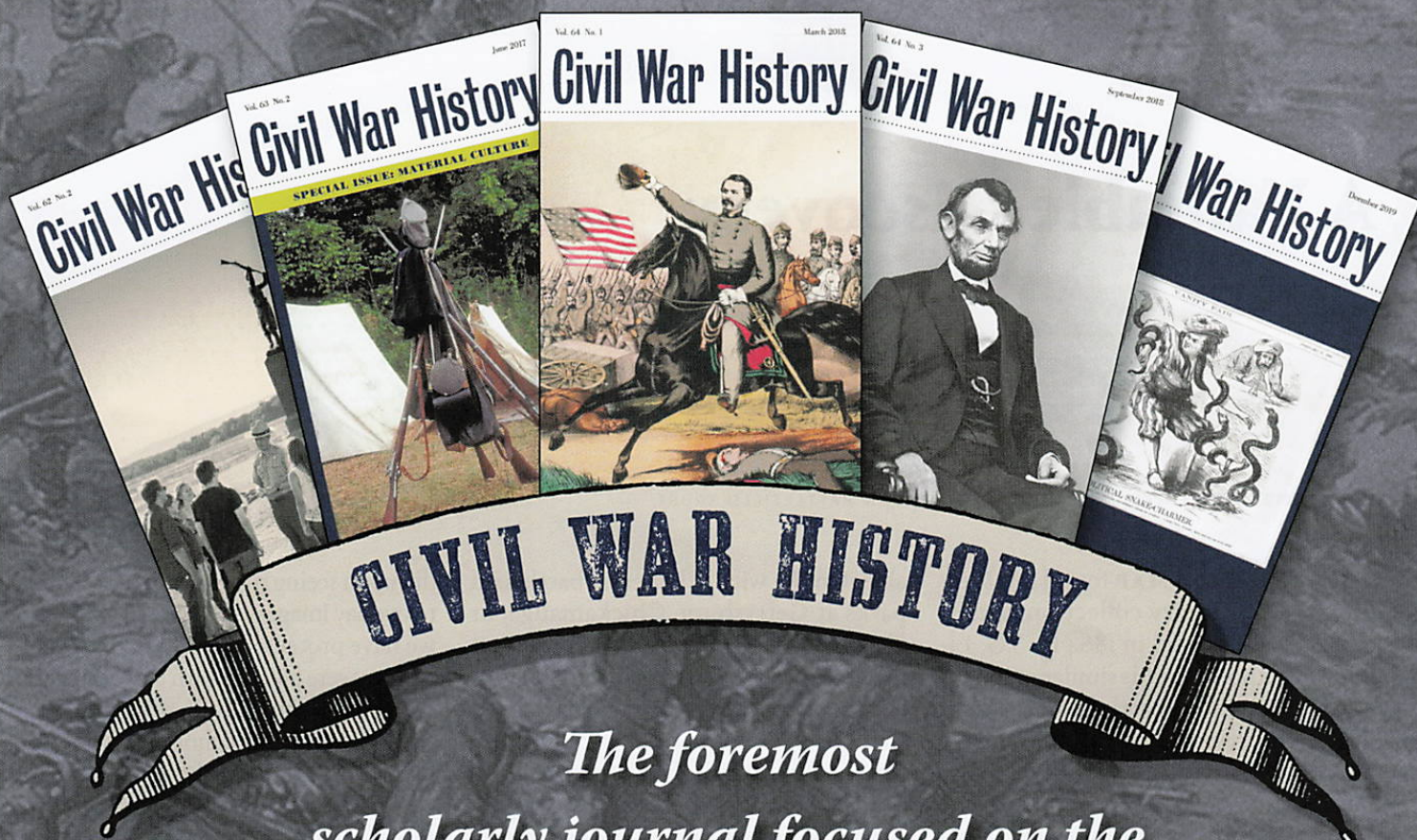
"There is a pretty spring just below where I sit and a sign over it which says, 'Don't drink this water, poison.' ... Some of the boys don't mind the sign. Some that are burning up with fever and thirst manage to stagger down here and fill up with water and go back to their tents and die."

—**Chauncey Cook**, 25th Wisconsin Infantry, on a spring close to his camp, near Snyder's Bluff, Mississippi, in a letter to his mother, July 25, 1863

"The dirt roads were very dusty, and sometimes we could not see ten feet ahead. The perspiration caused clots of mud to form in our eyebrows, hair, whiskers, and mustaches. At nightfall when we went into camp, very little water could be found, and frequently we drank out of the ponds in the barn lots. How many wiggletails and tadpoles I have drunk will never be known."

—Confederate soldier **Marcus Toney**, on campaigning in Kentucky during the summer of 1862, in his memoirs





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A Valuable Discovery

BY O. JAMES LIGHTHIZER PRESIDENT, AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST

THIS SUMMER, A MAP found in a New York Public Library collection caused quite a stir. Created in 1864 by S.G. Elliott, well known for his similar mapping at the Gettysburg battlefield, it shows precise locations of more than 5,800 burials after the September 17, 1862, Battle of Antietam. Historians were eager to explore the interpretive opportunities created by such a resource—particularly its interplay with other primary sources such as diary entries, photographs, and more. Not just a powerful visual illustration of the human cost of war, the Elliott Burial Map is also a tool for shaping preservation efforts at Antietam, like its sister document does for Gettysburg.

Historians know that the site of death in battle and the place of burial are often nearly the same. The fallen were interred by their comrades or by burial crews. Manpower and time dictated that bodies may have been grouped in a row or cluster, but typically were not moved far.

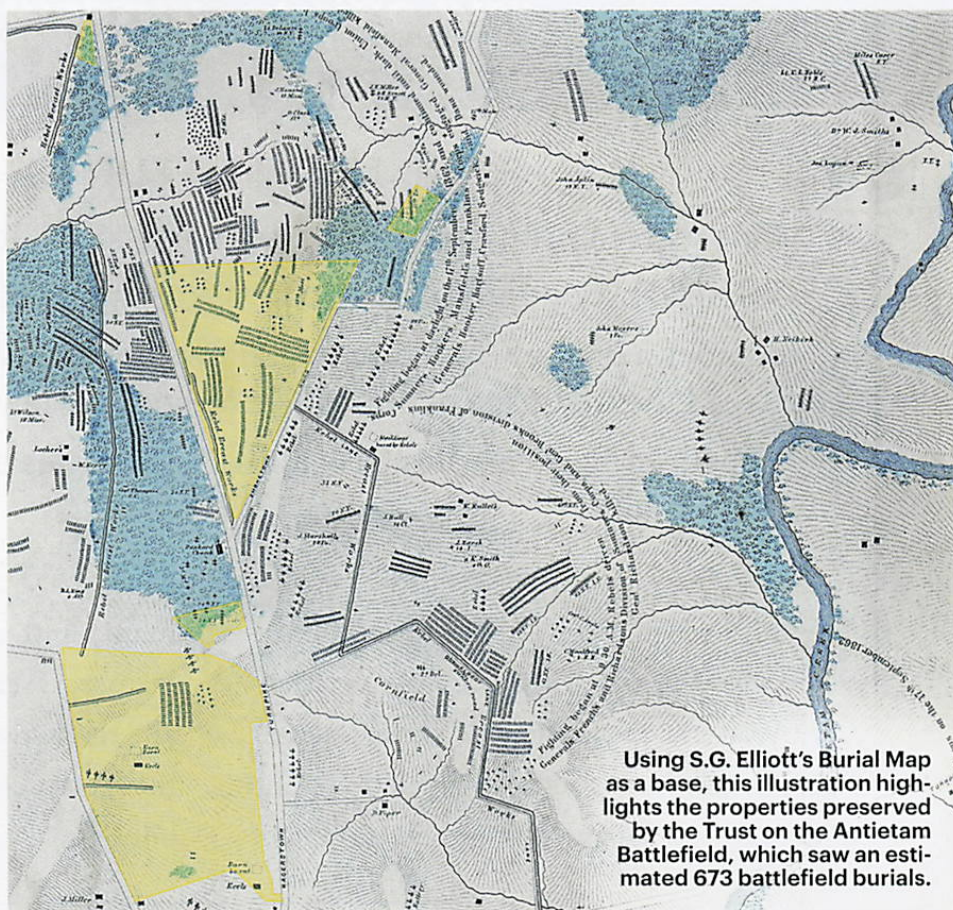
So the Elliott Burial Map can function almost as a “heat map” for Antietam. Rather than relying on interpretations of period accounts, we now have data plotted onto the landscape. Muster rolls may have told us how many men from a given regiment died in the battle, and reports, letters, and diaries might have indicated that a significant number fell during a particular volley—perhaps offering some kind of reference point, like “halfway across the field.” But here we have practical data indicating where events occurred.

The manner in which Antietam National Battlefield was envisioned and created makes this map especially valu-

able. Unlike with other early battlefield parks at Gettysburg, Chickamauga, or Shiloh, the federal government did not intend to acquire large holdings at Antietam. Instead it focused on creating a road system designed to teach military strategy by using the battlefields as classrooms, a purpose for which only rights of way were required. The work of protecting large swaths of the battlefield was, it turned out, left to 20th-century preservationists.

One of the first things Trust historians

did upon seeing the Elliott Burial Map was to overlay imagery to locate the properties we have protected at Antietam to date—and we were pleased with this verification of our targeting. Of the 5,800 burials recorded on the map, more than 600 took place on the 461 acres the Trust has helped save. We then looked at a 2.6-acre tract near the Dunker Church that we were at that moment evaluating. Needless to say, its acquisition passed muster; you can visit battlefields.org/Antietam2020 to contribute to its preservation. 



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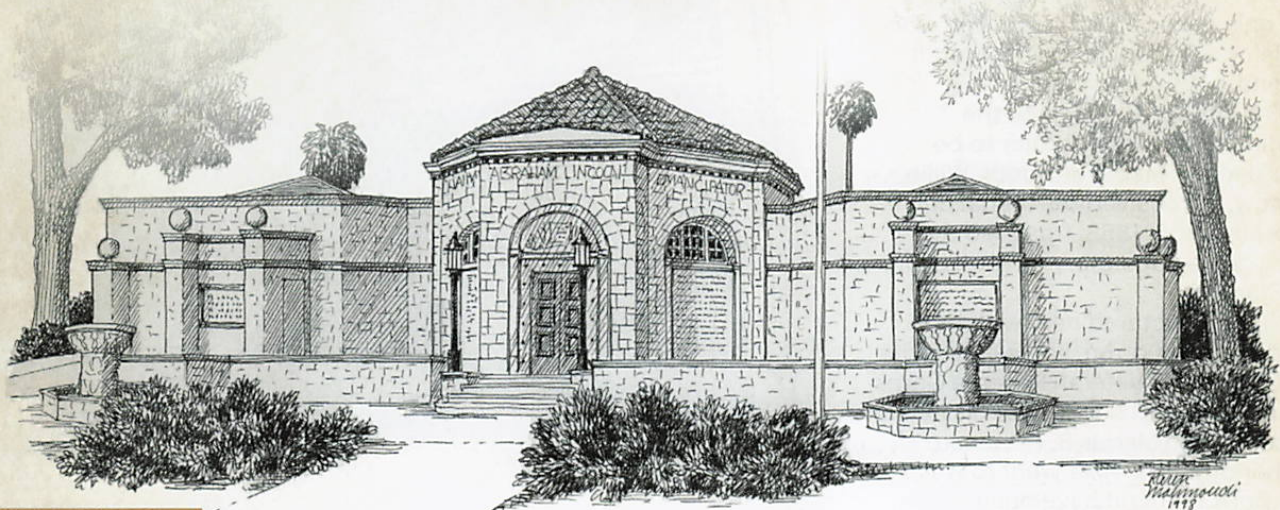
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A Pint-Sized Hero

BY RONALD S. CODDINGTON
PUBLISHER, MILITARY IMAGES

On July 4, 1862, Willie Johnston of the 3rd Vermont Infantry played his drum in a division parade at Harrison's Landing, Virginia. About a week shy of his 12th birthday, he had carried the drum during the last days of the Peninsula Campaign, George B. McClellan's failed attempt to take Richmond and subsequent withdrawal. The boy carried his drum even as the Union army soldiers around him cast aside much of their equipment in hasty retreat from the Confederates.

Little could Willie have known, on that Fourth of July, that he was the only musician in his division who hadn't discarded his drum or left it behind.

For this act, he became the youngest American soldier to be awarded the Medal of Honor. Willie, by now 13, received the medal on September 16, 1863, from—so the story goes—Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton.

Willie is pictured here with the medal and his drum, and wearing the uniform of the Veteran Reserve Corps, which he joined because of his health. According to Marius B. Peladeau, author of *When Willie Went to War*, this portrait might have been made during his visit to Washington, D.C., to receive his honor. Peladeau notes that the drumsticks appear expensive, perhaps topped by German silver or ivory.

Nothing is documented about Willie Johnston's life after the war, though one source claims he lived until 1941.



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My Remembrance of the War, etc. 1861-1865

The Memoir of
George C. Maguire
c.1893

Edited by William Maguire

As a young boy, George Maguire saw the Pratt St. Riots in Baltimore and the aftermath of the first attack by the Merrimac. He tells of the crab-eaten dead and the stinking wounded and was at the Battle of Antietam. Later, Clara Barton asks, "Whose boy I was?"

In his teens he was a customs man at Harper's Ferry and later he worked at the Hicks Hospital in Baltimore. Many of the stories are wry anecdotes of his misadventures and those of others, recounted with humor and affection.

His memoir is spare and unadorned, yet a certain pain seems slightly below the surface of some of the darker scenes recalled and described. The reader inevitably reflects upon the dual and simultaneous perspective of the boy and the man, decades later, who certainly forgot more than he has told us here.

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A REMARKABLE COLLECTION PAYS OFF

THE ARTIFACT: Photograph albums kept by Civil War diarist Mary Boykin Chesnut

CONDITION: The Moroccan leather albums have separated at the bindings. The photographs are in excellent condition with the handwriting strong and distinct.

DETAILS: Shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War, Mary Boykin Chesnut and her husband, U.S. Senator James Chesnut Jr., left Washington, D.C., for their native state, South Carolina. The socially and politically connected couple, many of whose friends became leading figures in the Confederacy, settled in the state's capital, Columbia. Over the course of the war they made eventful trips to Montgomery, Charleston, and Richmond—James as a member of the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States of America, then as an aide to General

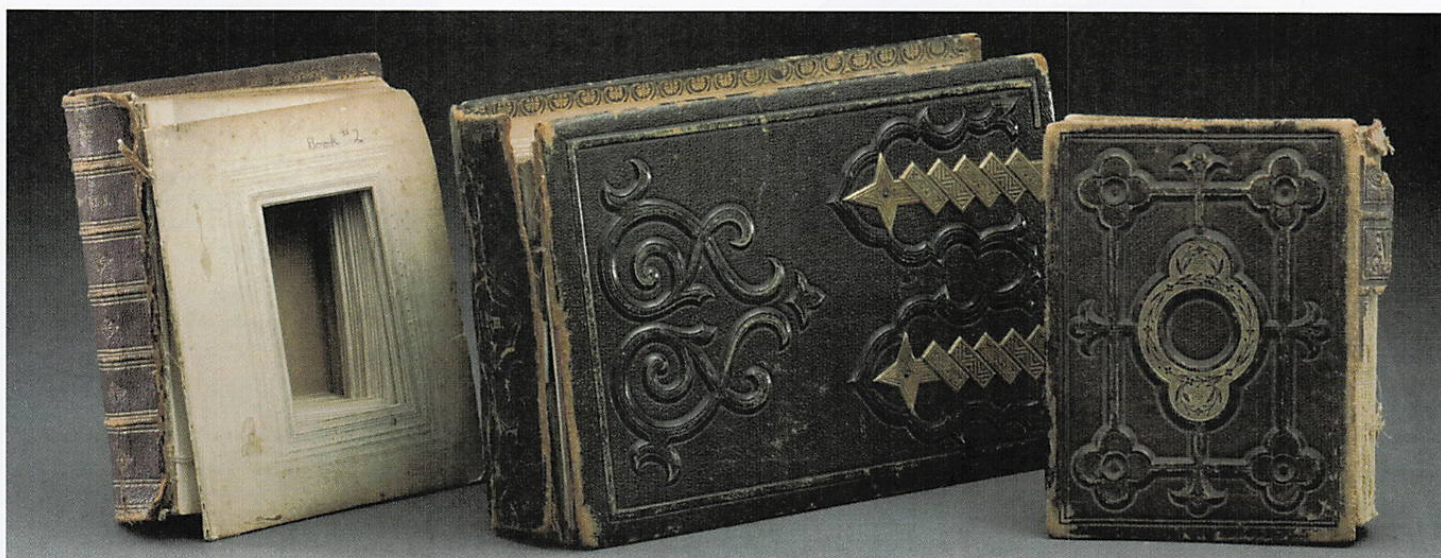
P.G.T. Beauregard and President Jefferson Davis, Mary as a masterful hostess to members of the Confederate elite. Through July 1865, Mary documented her experiences in a detailed diary—published in several versions in the decades after the conflict—that provides one of the fullest pictures of the South during the Civil War.

Mary also kept photo albums—given to her by former South Carolina governor John Hugh Means on April 2, 1861—that she added to throughout the war. (Means “presented me with a book, a photo-book, in which I am to pillory all the celebrities,” she noted in her diary.) By war’s end, the albums included over 200 “cartes de visite,” photographic portraits mounted on pieces of card, many of them autographed, of prominent politicians, civilians, and generals, including Davis and his wife, Varina; Robert E. Lee and members of his family; Confederate generals John

Bell Hood and Simon Bolivar Buckner; former President James Buchanan and former Senator Henry Clay; journalist Horace Greeley; and members of the Chesnut family, including Mary. After Mary’s death at 63, in November 1886, the albums passed to her niece, then to one or more photo collectors.

QUOTABLE: Mary cited her photo collection several times in her wartime diary. On September 7, 1863, she noted that “Mrs. [Robert E.] Lee gave me a likeness of the General in a photograph taken soon after the Mexican War. She likes it so much better than the later ones. He certainly was a handsome man then, handsomer even than now. I shall prize it for Mrs. Lee’s sake, too.” On July 12, 1862, she described giving a visiting boy an album to look at. He took exception to an image in its pages. “‘You have Lincoln in your book!’ said he. ‘I am astonished at you. I hate him!’ And he placed the book on the floor and struck Old Abe in the face with his fist,” Mary wrote.

VALUE: \$77,675 (price realized at Heritage Auctions in Dallas, Texas, in 2007). “Mary Chesnut’s Civil War photograph albums are historical treasures,” noted an auction house representative at the time. “Mary’s handwriting on the photographs is left untouched; it’s a remarkable catalog of faces collected by the famous diarist.” 



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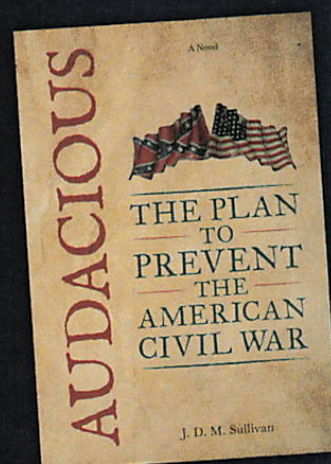
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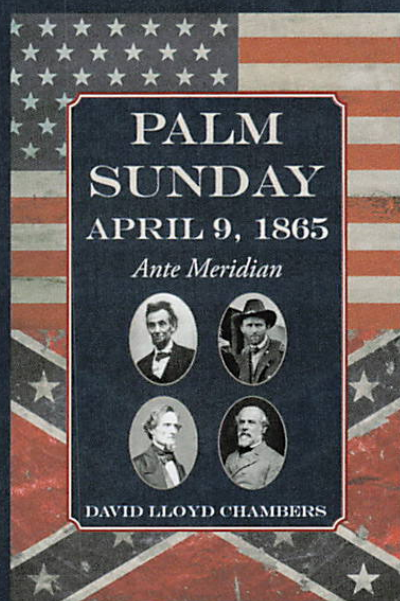
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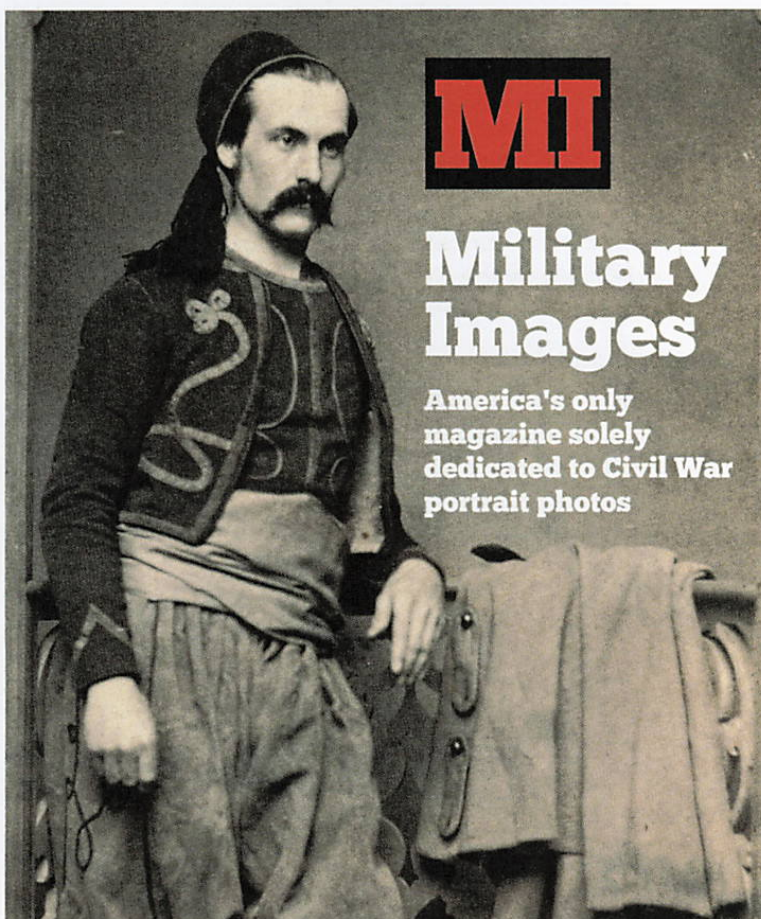
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The Soldier Vote

BY JONATHAN W. WHITE

When the Civil War began, Pennsylvania was the only state that permitted soldiers to vote in the field. In October 1861, thousands of them voted in state and local elections, but in May 1862, the state supreme court declared Pennsylvania's law unconstitutional. Meanwhile, several western states—including Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota—extended the ballot to their soldiers. At that time, support or opposition to such a voting practice did not fall along partisan lines.

Then in the fall, Democrats made sweeping gains nationwide. Many Republicans believed this was because their voters were serving in the army—and were largely unable to vote.

By the time of the presidential election of 1864, in which George B. McClellan challenged President Abraham Lincoln, 19 northern states had enfranchised soldiers. Four states—Connecticut, New York, Minnesota, and West Virginia—required soldiers' votes to be mailed home and counted with the home vote, so it is impossible to know how many soldiers from those states voted, or for whom. The other states permitted soldiers to vote in the field.

Shown here are highlights of the election results from votes cast by soldiers in the field, which represented less than 6 percent of the 4,034,789 ballots cast in the election.

2,223,035

Overall votes cast for Abraham Lincoln (55.1%)

1,811,754

Overall votes cast for George B. McClellan (44.9%)

150,000

Approximate number of soldier votes cast in the field

78%

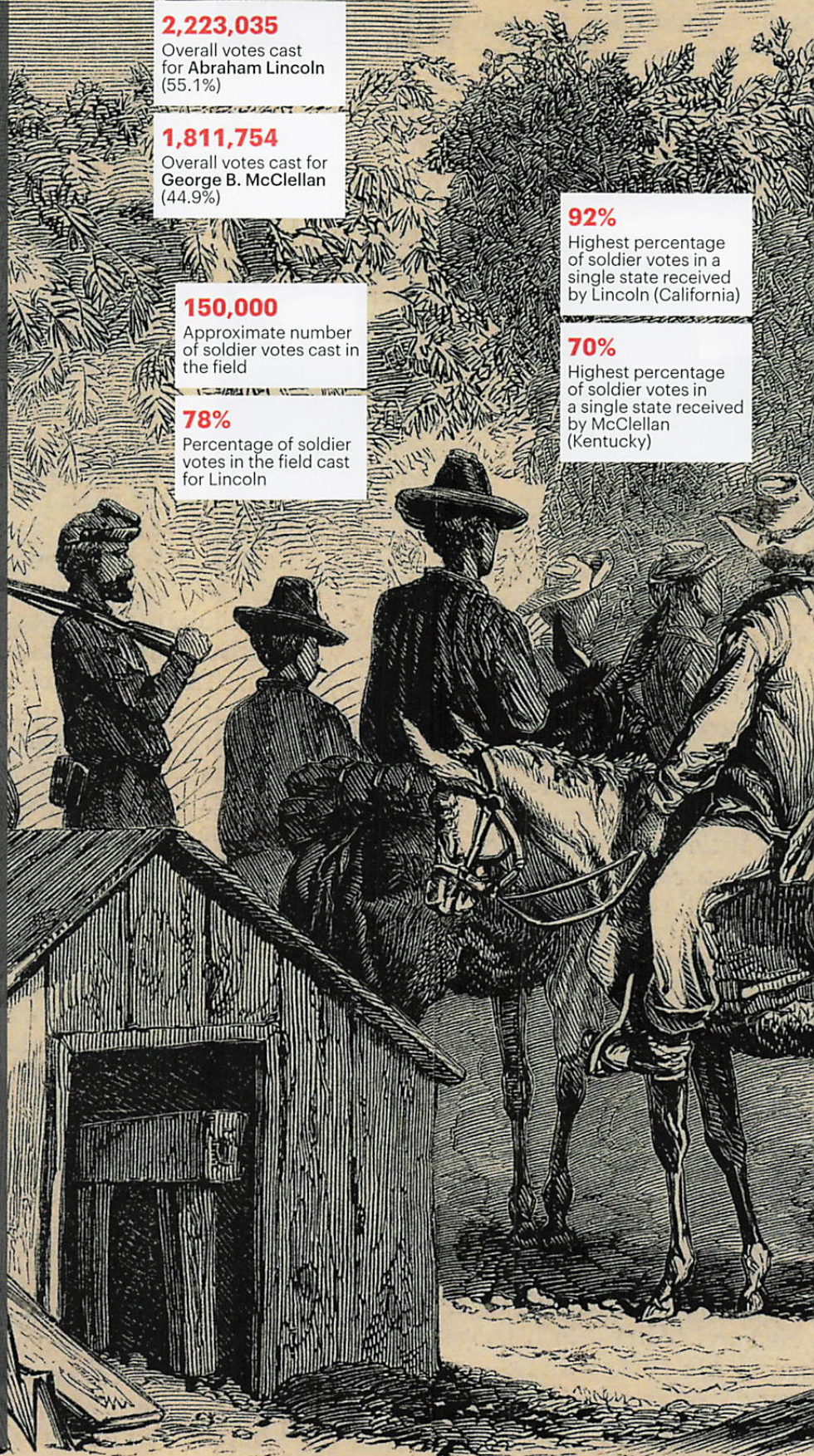
Percentage of soldier votes in the field cast for Lincoln

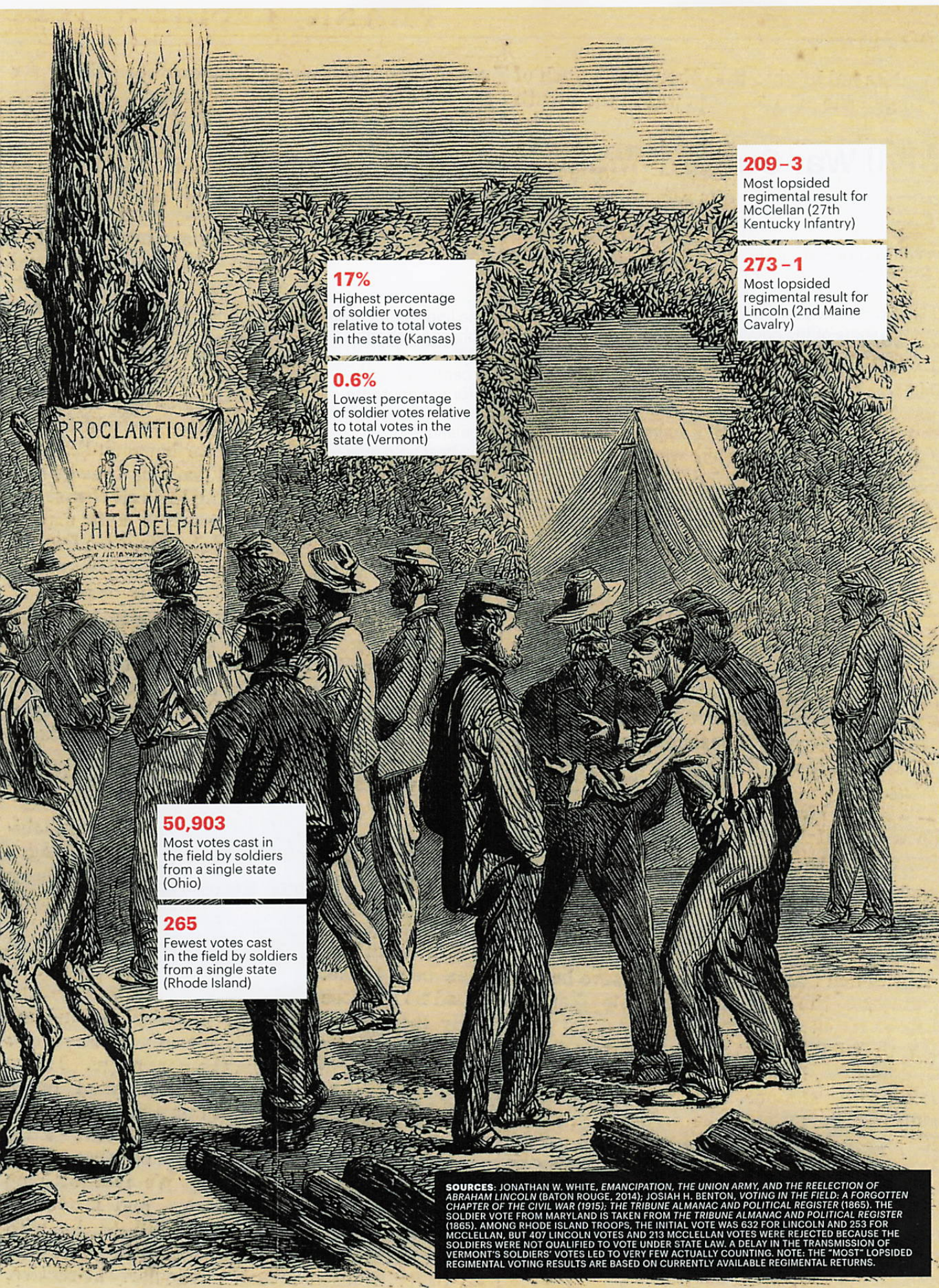
92%

Highest percentage of soldier votes in a single state received by Lincoln (California)

70%

Highest percentage of soldier votes in a single state received by McClellan (Kentucky)





209-3

Most lopsided
regimental result for
McClellan (27th
Kentucky Infantry)

273-1

Most lopsided
regimental result for
Lincoln (2nd Maine
Cavalry)

17%

Highest percentage
of soldier votes
relative to total votes
in the state (Kansas)

0.6%

Lowest percentage
of soldier votes relative
to total votes in the
state (Vermont)

50,903

Most votes cast in
the field by soldiers
from a single state
(Ohio)

265

Fewest votes cast
in the field by soldiers
from a single state
(Rhode Island)

SOURCES: JONATHAN W. WHITE, *EMANCIPATION, THE UNION ARMY, AND THE REELECTION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN* (BATON ROUGE, 2014); JOSIAH H. BENTON, *VOTING IN THE FIELD: A FORGOTTEN CHAPTER OF THE CIVIL WAR* (1915); *THE TRIBUNE ALMANAC AND POLITICAL REGISTER* (1865). THE SOLDIER VOTE FROM MARYLAND IS TAKEN FROM *THE TRIBUNE ALMANAC AND POLITICAL REGISTER* (1865). AMONG RHODE ISLAND TROOPS, THE INITIAL VOTE WAS 632 FOR LINCOLN AND 253 FOR MCCLELLAN, BUT 407 LINCOLN VOTES AND 213 MCCLELLAN VOTES WERE REJECTED BECAUSE THE SOLDIERS WERE NOT QUALIFIED TO VOTE UNDER STATE LAW. A DELAY IN THE TRANSMISSION OF VERMONT'S SOLDIERS' VOTES LED TO VERY FEW ACTUALLY COUNTING. NOTE: THE "MOST" LOPSIDED REGIMENTAL VOTING RESULTS ARE BASED ON CURRENTLY AVAILABLE REGIMENTAL RETURNS.

Civil War Sutlers' Mall

BY BOB ZELLER PRESIDENT, CENTER FOR CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHY

Union soldiers who were fortunate enough to serve behind the lines might have enjoyed some of the comforts of home. In the center of this photographed Virginia scene from 1864 or 1865, several dozen soldiers can be seen shopping in sutlers' stores in a covered marketplace. Another group at center-left is engaged in conversation, while 10 men in blue knowingly pose for the photographer. At left, enclosed by a decorative white fence, is a modest whitewashed church, while the building at right carries the sign "Ambrotype and Photographic Gallery." On the hill in the background are some of the best field quarters to be found anywhere during the war; the semi-permanent huts show front doors and windows that opened and closed. Some even have chimneys. But the one 19th-century indignity no soldier could avoid were soggy roads ankle-deep in mud, which they would have here in abundance.

► THE NONPROFIT **CENTER FOR CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHY** (CIVILWARPHOTOGRAPHY.ORG) IS DEVOTED TO COLLECTING, PRESERVING, AND DIGITIZING CIVIL WAR IMAGES.





A Man of Sorrows

UNDERSTANDING THE ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICANCE OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S MELANCHOLY BY MARK GRIMSLEY

ABRAHAM LINCOLN HAD A GREAT reputation for humor. He cracked jokes constantly—often painfully bad ones, as when he said after examining a model of the design for the ironclad warship USS *Monitor*, “All I have to say is what the girl said when she stuck her foot into the stocking. It strikes me there’s something in it.”¹ Even before informing his Cabinet of his momentous decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln first read an article, “High-Handed Outrage at Utica,” by the noted humorist Artemus Ward—much to the annoyance of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton.²

But Lincoln’s humor often functioned as a way of masking the depression that plagued him most of his life, a condition he often called “the hypo”—short for “hypochondriasis,” a term now mainly associated with anxiety about imagined illnesses (hypochondria) but once synonymous with melancholy. Joshua Wolf Shenk, perhaps the closest student of Lincoln’s depressions, considers him to have suffered the classic symptoms of clinical depression on several occasions, with the age of onset at 26, soon after the death of Ann Rutledge, the object of what may have been his first serious love affair. This might have been classified as simple grief but for suicidal ideations so frequent and intense that friends kept close watch on him for fear that he might kill himself.³

Today Lincoln’s depressions would certainly be a political liability; in 1972 reports that U.S. Senator Thomas Eagleton had been treated for clinical depression forced Democratic presidential nominee George McGovern to drop him as his running mate. But Shenk, in his book *Lincoln’s Melancholy* (2005), maintains that in Lincoln’s own time, his depressions made him a sympathetic figure. A biographical article published soon after his election to the presidency observed that Lincoln had once been so despondent that his friends “placed him under guard for fear of his committing suicide,” but used the episode as an example of Lincoln’s ability to triumph over adversity.⁴ Shenk takes a similar view. Lincoln, he writes,

“learned how to articulate his suffering, find succor, endure, and adapt.... [H]e forged meaning from his affliction so that it became not merely an obstacle to overcome, but a factor in his good life.”⁵ Or as the subtitle of Shenk’s book puts it, depression not only challenged Lincoln but “fueled his greatness.”

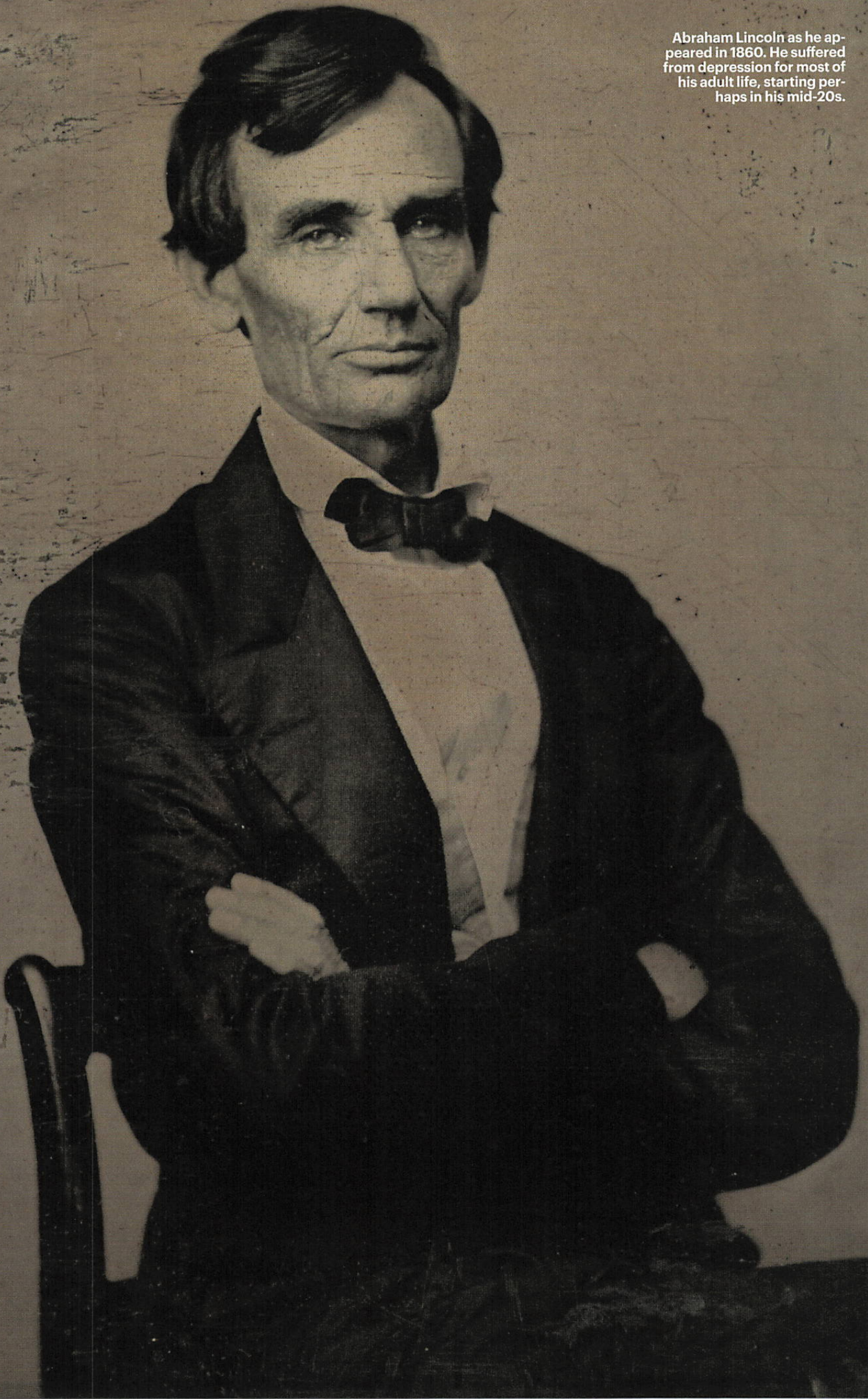
I am not at all sure that I believe this. Having experienced clinical depression for most of my life, I have found it to be uniformly debilitating and redeemed only by the opportunity it has given me to advocate on behalf of others who suffer from mental illness. It is for me, as it was for novelist William Styron, “a howling tempest in the brain,” and this I think is the more usual experience of those it attacks.⁶ Andrew Solomon, author of *The Noonday Demon*, a classic exploration of clinical depression, himself grapples with the disorder and has it more nearly correct: “[T]here are boundaries on resilience. I would not vote for a fragile president. I wish this weren’t so. I couldn’t be president, and it would be a disaster if I were to try. The few exceptions to this rule—Abraham Lincoln, or Winston Churchill, each of whom suffered from depression—used their anxiety and their concern as the basis for their leadership, but that requires a truly remarkable personality and a particular brand of depression that is not disabling at crucial times.”⁷ Those qualifiers surely apply to Lincoln, particularly an aspect of his personality famously pointed out by his longtime law partner William H. Herndon: “His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest.”⁸

Nevertheless, within the American Iliad, Lincoln’s melancholy is a famous and enduring part of his image. Herndon himself claimed, “He was a sad-looking man; his melancholy dripped from him as he walked.... Lincoln’s melancholy never failed to impress any man who ever saw or knew him.” Herndon attributed this characteristic despondency to two things: “the endless series of troubles in his

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▶ To view this article’s reference notes, turn to page 70.

Abraham Lincoln as he appeared in 1860. He suffered from depression for most of his adult life, starting perhaps in his mid-20s.



Grin and Bear It

HOW A BRITISH IDIOM CAME TO REPRESENT THE ATTITUDE OF SOLDIERS
AND CIVILIANS DURING THE CIVIL WAR BY TRACY L. BARNETT

IN 1860, AND AGAIN in 1864, Americans went to the polls; some cast their votes for peace, but none of their candidates—John C. Breckenridge, John Bell, Stephen Douglas, George B. McClellan—became president. Instead, Abraham Lincoln was twice elected to office and under his leadership the Civil War commenced and continued. Some men wanted to fight while the reluctant others were conscripted into the ranks. Once on the battlefield, a competent commanding officer was a godsend, while an incompetent one felt like an unsummoned death wish. Conditions in camp were not predictable. Food might be poorly cooked, rancid, or absent. Shoddy uniform pants frayed in the backside and canvas tents leaked at the seams. Heavy rain, wet snow, deep mud, unbearable heat—all of it vexed soldiers and they complained at length about it and everything else in their letters home.

What could a soldier do? He certainly could not single-handedly stop the war, oust the president, end conscription, fire a general, eliminate bloat from bureaucracy, or improve the weather. He was, after all, only a man and not God.

Civil War soldiers had only two options: they could skedaddle, risking dishonor at best or recapture and execution at worst, or they could shoulder their fates and make the best of a bad situation. Most chose the latter and adjusted to the rigors of army life. They amended their expectations, adapted to hardships, and psychologically embraced the unknown and unknowable.

In short, soldiers chose to “grin and bear it.” In August 1862, it “rained like blaises” for two days and two nights, but the men of the 35th North Carolina Infantry soldiered on, or, as A. Pinkney Ward wrote, “wee grin and bear it.” Georgian James A. McMurtrey longed to see his “Sweet Willie,” “but I know there is

no chance and for that reason as the saying is I *grin and endure* and hope the day will come when I shall be at home with my Dear ones one time more.”¹

Which brings us to this installment’s phrase: *grin and bear it*. The nation had to *grin and bear* the Civil War’s cruel misfortunes and absurd uncertainties.

Americans did not frequently *grin and bear it* during the first half of the 19th century. To be sure, they endured assorted hardships at home and at work, but few used that expression to describe their mindset. Instead, antebellum women *suffered* abuse and *bore* physical pain while men *persevered* in trying times and *overcame* adversity.

Our stoic cousins across the pond, however, were *grinning and bearing it* long before us. The phrase first appeared as *grin and abide* in the banter of 18th-century British seamen—men very probably impressed into military or merchant service against their wills, subjected to severe corporal punishments, and trapped with no recourse on undersupplied

vessels in the middle of an ocean. That would seem to define a moment where one can only *grin and bear it*. In 1775, William Hickey, a well-heeled and well-traveled English lawyer, offered a bit of advice to a terrified friend while the two endured a rough sea voyage. Hickey said, “I recommend you to *grin and bear it* (an expression used by sailors after a long continuance of bad weather).”² Hickey’s vignette introduced the idiom into the English vocabulary.

The British quickly took note, though the Americans did not. The Library of Congress’ *Chronicling America* database has but nine mentions of the phrase prior to 1840. The term became popular in the 1850s, as the nation barreled toward war. Bleeding Kansas, the Dred Scott decision, and John

grin•and•bear•it

/grɪn ænd bɛr ɪt/ idiom

To accept or endure misfortune without complaint (originated in 18th-century Britain).

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► To view this article’s reference notes, turn to page 70.



Wounded Union soldiers rest outside a hospital established by the U.S. Sanitary Commission in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1864. These and countless others—soldier and civilian—would learn to *grin* and bear the hardships and confusion wrought by the Civil War.

WOUNDED

FOR THOUSANDS OF INJURED OR INFIRM UNION SOLDIERS, THE INVALID CORPS PROVIDED A MEANS TO EXTEND THEIR MILITARY SERVICE.

NOT ALL OF THEM WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY.

BY SARAH HANDLEY-
COUSINS



WARRIORS



Members of the 10th U.S. Veteran Reserve Corps pose for the camera in Washington, D.C., at war's end. Created within the Union army, the organization—previously known as the Invalid Corps—allowed partly disabled or infirm soldiers to perform light duties, freeing able-bodied troops for the front line.

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GEORGE FARNUM DID NOT LIKE BEING A “HOSPITAL BUMMER.”

After the 22-year-old from New Hampshire, a regimental musician, was shot in the shoulder at the Battle of Fredericksburg, he was confined to the New Hallowell Hospital in Alexandria, Virginia, for months while the wound healed. Hospital life was tedious, and convalescing soldiers were subjected to routine “inspections,” where the attending surgeon toured the wards. The men had to sweep their rooms and make their beds, then sit perfectly at attention (buttons and boots polished) for the exam. The soldiers, Farnum wrote to his hometown newspaper, *The Farmer’s Cabinet*, “remain as still and mute as statues until all is over and the ‘medicine man’ makes his exit with as much pomposity as a new made prince.”¹ When the surgeon was satisfied, the soldiers were rewarded with a trip to church.

Farnum itched to get out of the hospital, and hoped he would be transferred back to his unit, the 5th New Hampshire Infantry. Instead, he found himself sent to an altogether new unit: the Invalid Corps. He wrote to *The Farmer’s Cabinet*, “here I am, an unwilling member of the ... ‘United States Paupers.’” His bitter quip summed up how many men felt on being transferred to the Invalid Corps. The creation of the corps was at least partly justified by the desire to keep disabled soldiers honorably in uniform, in the belief that continued service would ward off feelings of uselessness and despair, but many soldiers saw the unit as a stigmatizing purgatory.

By 1863, the federal government was increasingly concerned about troop strength in the Union army. While the federal forces were always greater than their Confederate counterparts, and the North had a larger male population of military age to draw on, Union soldiers were required to perform tasks beyond the battlefield, such as maintaining the defenses of Washington, D.C., and waging conflicts against Native Americans in the West. In the spring of that year, the government began a series of efforts to ensure that the army remained as large as possible. In March, the Enrollment Act, congressional legislation that authorized the first draft, was enacted. Two months later, the War Department issued General Order 143, which allowed for the enlistment of black men in the Union army and established the United States Colored Troops. Given these at-



► To view this article’s reference notes, turn to page 70.

Union soldiers convalesce in Armory Square Hospital in Washington, D.C. From 1863 to war's end, many injured or infirm troops released from hospitals found themselves sent to the Invalid Corps—instead of to their old regiments or to their homes. The move dismayed men like New Hampshire veteran George Farnum, who complained that “here I am, an unwilling member of the ... ‘United States Paupers,’” after his transfer to the corps.



tempts to expand enlistment, some in the Union army and War Department questioned whether the army's medical staff were perhaps too cavalier with disability discharges and convalescent policies. Was it possible that able-bodied men were getting out of their enlistments with injuries that should not disqualify them from service?

It made sense to question the protocols for discharge and recuperation. The army did have large numbers of soldiers who were too sick or injured to serve on the front lines, but well enough not to be bedridden. Soldiers such as George Farnum, whose wounds required long-term rest and care, were sent to large general hospitals in Alexandria, Washington, and other cities for treatment. But once a soldier had survived the most critical part of his convalescence, it wasn't always clear what to do with him. Recovering soldiers took up hospital beds, chafed at hospital rules, were bored, and got into trouble. Farnum recalled that convalescing soldiers took in the amusements of Alexandria, particularly flocking to theaters and the circus. Men at the Satterlee Hospital in Philadelphia regularly got drunk and played cards, which didn't counter the general perception that hospitalized soldiers were malingerers trying to get out of re-entering the ranks.

Many surgeons considered discharges the simplest solution. Others got rid of restless convalescents by sending them home on furlough, reasoning that having them finish their recovery at home was better than having them take up beds and hospital labor—except, however, that numbers of them never returned, causing yet another set of problems. Army surgeon Roberts Bartholow declared that authorizing discharges was one of the most critical duties of military surgeons. He estimated that by May 1863, more than 143,000 men deemed disabled had been discharged—and Bartholow speculated that a good portion of them were not deserving of the ticket home.

When the army tried to solve its manpower issue by making use of convalescing soldiers, it did little to sharpen the line between soldier and patient. A directive from the War Department in April 1862 allowed the chief medical officers of each city to use any “convalescent, wounded, or feeble men who can perform such duties” as nurses, cooks, or hospital attendants instead of giving them disability discharges. Ostensibly, this meant that the army could benefit from the labor of recovering soldiers—but just weeks later, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton issued another order authorizing medical officers to discharge any men they believed would be unfit for duty for at least 30 days if the soldier so requested. Few men would choose hospital labor over the opportunity to go home, and even when they did, the system was chaotic and disorganized. No one tracked how long soldiers had been on light duty, nor were

there clear guidelines for when a soldier should be sent back to the ranks—all the decisions made by surgeons. The men who remained in hospitals, even those who were engaged in hospital work, were quickly labeled “hospital bummers” and accused of avoiding the front lines. Annoyed by the large numbers of recuperating soldiers loitering in hospitals, surgeons still found disability discharges the easiest solution.

The War Department also worried that hospital work was detrimental to soldiers. Most such work was done by women; the men working in hospitals were mostly black. Nursing, cooking, and light handy work were mainly seen as inappropriate for white men who should be doing the “real” work of soldiering. Invalid Corps adjutant general John W. De Forest noted in his report at the end of the war to Provost Marshal General James B. Fry that “invalids” who performed hospital work “were useful indeed,” but they “ceased to be soldiers in fact and spirit.”² What good was it to keep soldiers occupied if the work made them less rather than more fit for active duty?

How to engage disabled soldiers in work that was both critical to the army's operations and possible for men labeled unfit for field duty to perform in a controlled and organized fashion? The answer was the Invalid Corps, born in April 1863. Under Secretary Stanton's General Order 105, only men with specific injuries automatically qualified for a disability discharge: men with amputations (though they could choose, instead, to enter the Invalid Corps), men with certain severe ailments, and men whose recuperation would outlast their remaining enlistment term. No other men were to be granted disability discharges. Instead, upon examination by a medical officer, they were to perform suitable hospital work, and it would be a medical officer who determined whether they should return to their ranks or be transferred to the Invalid Corps. There were few injuries too severe for the Invalid Corps, even genital ones. Typically, conditions deemed disqualifying were those that could cause a disturbance in the ranks or involved cognitive impairment, such as insanity or a severe head injury, or presented problems of hygiene, such as wounds that affected bowel or bladder function.

So most soldiers were transferred to the Invalid Corps, as was Farnum; discharged soldiers could reenlist to join it. The corps comprised two battalions. First Battalion included soldiers considered “the most efficient and able-bodied,” who could still shoulder arms, march, and perform guard duty.³ Second Battalion was drawn from soldiers with more severe injuries or ailments and those who had lost a hand or arm. Initially, the plan was to place soldiers who had lost a foot or leg into a third battalion, but that plan never materialized, so lower limb amputees were assigned



Before the creation of the Invalid Corps, Union surgeons mainly dealt with the problem of restless convalescents by issuing discharges. By May 1863, more than 143,000 men deemed disabled had been released from the service. Below: Surgeons of the Third Division, IX Corps, Army of the Potomac, in August 1864.



to Second Battalion. Since amputees could request a discharge instead of an automatic transfer to the corps, Second Battalion was always smaller than First Battalion. Still, by late 1863, the corps had grown to include 16 regiments, 203 companies, and 18,255 men.⁴

The Invalid Corps answered to the Provost Marshal, and its members performed a variety of support tasks according to their abilities. First Battalion typically performed work that required greater physical ability, including escorting new troops to the front lines, guarding prisons, or serving as military police. Because they were allowed to carry arms, soldiers in First Battalion occasionally found themselves pulled into scrapes. Some First Battalion soldiers participated in a skirmish at Fort Stevens in 1864; others had been injured (and one died) trying to control protesters during the New York City draft riots in July 1863. Alfred Bellard, an Invalid Corps private formerly of the 5th New Jersey Infantry, recalled how, serving as prison guards, they had to use their supposedly “unfit” bodies to carry drunken soldiers to the barracks on their backs. Second Battalion performed less physically arduous tasks, serving as orderlies, cooks, nurses, clerks, and supply workers.

The Invalid Corps marked a new conception of a soldier’s obligation to the army and to the nation. A war wound, though lauded as evidence of bravery, did not represent the culmination of a soldier’s duty. Instead, if it was deemed severe enough to make a soldier unfit for field service, it could mean other renewed duty. The Invalid Corps was founded on the notion that there were many ways to serve the nation in its time of need—and not even shedding blood on its behalf was enough to get a citizen-soldier out of that responsibility. Further, the War Department styled the Invalid Corps as a way for soldiers to preserve their manhood. In the fall of 1863, Provost Marshal General James B. Fry wrote to Stanton about men serving in the corps, that “the pride and soldierly spirit which produced their battle scars is fostered and protected by giving them useful and honorable employment, instead of leaving them inactive and in want, a burden to themselves and to the community.”⁵ Fry was not alone in viewing disability as synonymous with dependency and emasculation; even the most honorable war wound had the potential to ruin a man. The Invalid Corps offered an escape from that fate by keeping soldiers occupied in worthy war work as long as possible.

It might seem that to a fighting army with plenty to worry about, the fate of its disabled

soldiers would be of little concern. But in 1863 that army was also fighting on the homefront for civilian belief in the war as moral and righteous.

If the army broke the bodies of thousands of citizen-soldiers, then sent them home to become charity cases, it risked being perceived as callous and mercenary, chewing men up and spitting them out. Next to death, war wounds represented the ultimate sacrifice of a citizen-soldier—a small offering in the great national bloodletting. These soldiers were worthy of honor. At the same time, war wounds resulted in disability, which Civil War-era Americans struggled to see as anything but negative. Most of them, like Fry, believed a disability meant becoming a dependent, a person incapable of achieving economic independence. While some members of society were understood to be naturally dependent—women, children, and non-whites—white men were expected to be the

opposite, providing for those who could not provide for themselves. The unworthy poor were labeled paupers, stigmatized as not just physically disabled but morally degraded. A white man who relied on charity was not only less able than his fellow man, but was also corrupted, sapped of manhood, and pathetic. And while the War Department and federal government clearly viewed war wounds as honorable, their fears that disabled veterans would become paupers revealed a certain discounting of the soldiers’ patri-

otic sacrifices.

That the Invalid Corps had been created to save soldiers from pauperism seemed to be the popular interpretation on the homefront. The New Hampshire editors of *The Farmer’s Cabinet* wrote that “the great object of this Corps is to give honorable employment to those who have lost health or limbs in the service, and are unfit for other employments.”⁶ Several newspapers suggested that disabled soldiers should be thankful for the Invalid Corps for saving them from a future degraded dependency. One Maryland newspaper proclaimed of the corps, “the maimed and enfeebled soldier is provided for, and the citizen is no longer deterred from enlisting in the army, for fear of beggary, should the fortune of war deprive him of the means of support by his labor.” Those already wounded, the editors went on, were now “not to be cast upon the charity of the world as no longer of value.”⁷ Clearly, battle scars alone were not sufficient to preserve the manhood of a disabled soldier.

There was another more practical reason the War Department wanted to keep disabled soldiers in the ranks: It would save the federal government



Provost Marshal
General James B. Fry

In the minds of many in the War Department and on the homefront, the creation of the Invalid Corps served as a way to save disabled veterans from being relegated to public charity. Right: This wartime sketch shows two “suffering soldiers”—the sort of men thought to be helped by enrollment in the corps—walking the streets.



a lot of money while boosting manpower. Keeping disabled soldiers in the ranks, even in a segregated unit, to do essential but noncombat tasks like guarding prisons and supply work, meant physically fitter soldiers manning the frontlines. But more important, it meant the federal government would not have to pay discharged disabled soldiers their pensions. Passed in 1862, the Act to Grant Pensions provided a government pension to each Union soldier disabled during his time in the army. Soldiers transferred to the Invalid Corps received their same army rate of pay. Had they been discharged, they would be eligible for pension payments—for which they owed the government no labor in exchange—and probably replaced by a new recruit, doubling the expense for the government.

The War Department's intentions in creating the unit were one thing; what Invalid Corps soldiers actually thought about serving in it were another. While their labor might have been critical to the smooth operation of the army, their new tasks were not the stuff of patriotic songs or stories. Even the way they entered the corps irked some soldiers. While enlisting resonated with cultural beliefs about citizen-soldiers doing their duty for their country, a medical transfer to a unit of invalids, where you spent your time doing what seemed like busy work, felt like an insult. George Farnum resented not being sent back to the 5th New Hampshire to serve out his enlistment with his comrades, and chafed at being labeled an invalid, a term that carried effeminate overtones. His feeling was more anger than grief or low spirits, attended by disgust and a little shame at being forced into the unit. In his letters to his hometown newspaper, Farnum regularly referred to the corps in terms associated with pauperism: an "almshouse," the "United States Paupers," and the "cripple corps."

Many Invalid Corps soldiers longed for their old units. William Dunn was only a teenager when he was shot in the throat at Chancellorsville serving with the 11th New Jersey Infantry. After a long convalescence, he hoped to be allowed to return to his regiment, but instead found he was being sent to Second Battalion of the Invalid Corps. He reacted with grief: "As soon as I am mustered in the I.C. I have nothing more to do with the 11th Regiment of NJ or that with me, my name is then crossed off all company books." After months of camaraderie in the ranks and bonding under fire, Dunn grieved the loss of his regiment. Such feelings were known to be a problem by the leadership of the corps; in his end-of-war report on the unit, De Forest wrote that soldiers often begged to stay in their original regiments or be discharged rather than be transferred to the Invalid Corps.

Membership in the corps made soldiers feel disconnected from their former identity as combat

troops, relegated now to the fringes of the "real" army. They also felt marked as disabled and unfit—a feeling exacerbated by their uniforms. Rather than the federal blue worn by most of the army, Invalid Corps uniforms were sky blue, trimmed with dark blue. The idea was to visually differentiate Invalid Corps troops from field troops, so that soldiers working behind the lines wouldn't be suspected of shirking or straggling. But the effect was that Invalid Corps soldiers felt even more separate from the identity they had cultivated in the ranks. Many believed they had earned the dark blue Union uniform, and resented losing that mark of honor. The light blue uniforms didn't just mark soldiers as members of the Invalid Corps, but as disabled, which many nondisabled soldiers interpreted as a sign of inferiority. When a corps officer Colonel Charles F. Johnson briefly assumed command of regular regiments in defense of White House Landing in June 1864, he wrote to his wife that the soldiers "did not like the idea of 'coming into the field to be commanded by an Invalid,' they did not like the *light blue*."⁸

And then there was the name. Rather than emphasizing the sacrifices the corps' sick and disabled soldiers had made in the war effort, "invalid" instead brought to mind images of bedridden weakness and effeminacy. Worse still, the initials I.C. were army shorthand for spoiled or useless supplies. When a quartermaster received a crate of rotten meat, for instance, it was stamped I.C., which stood for "Inspected, Condemned." Soon, this became a general epithet for the soldiers of the corps, who were "condemned" to its service. Confederate prisoners, guarded by Invalid Corps members, called their captors "Condemned Yanks." Even the soldiers sometimes thought of themselves as condemned to the corps; E.C. Fisk, medically transferred to the unit, wrote that he felt part of a "set of condemned & great part useless men."⁹ The problems became serious enough that in March 1864, the Adjutant General's Office issued a general order changing the name to Veteran Reserve Corps, suggesting not incapacity but that these soldiers had been battle-tested and achieved veteran status.

Name change or no, the corps (and its soldiers) continued in a sort of limbo—a unit of tried and true battle veterans *and* a repository for soldiers who could no longer fight. Not only was this reflected in the media and army jokes, but also in the popular culture. Frank Wilder's song "The Invalid Corps" poked fun at the soldiers as a ridiculous group: "Some were too fond of bitters,/some had 'cork legs' and some 'one eye,'/with backs deformed and crooked,/ I'll bet you'd laugh'd til you cried/to see how 'cute' they looked."¹⁰ Another song, also called "The Invalid Corps," tells the story of a soldier with one eye who eventually drank himself out of the service. Far

Many members of the Invalid Corps chafed at being labeled invalids and then separated from their old regiments. They also disliked their new sky-blue uniforms, which reinforced their sense of separation from the rest of the Union army, whose men wore dark blue. Right: A member of the Invalid Corps in his light-blue uniform.





The Hero *of* Franklin

HOW QUICK THINKING BY THE HEADSTRONG COLONEL
EMERSON OPDYCKE HELPED SAVE THE DAY FOR UNION FORCES
AT ONE OF THE CIVIL WAR'S FIERCEST BATTLES
BY ANDREW S. BLEDSOE

Union officer
Emerson Opdycke





ON NOVEMBER 30, 1864, a bright Indian summer afternoon, Confederate General John Bell Hood looked out from the heights of Franklin, Tennessee, along Columbia Pike. Spread out before him, nearly a third of a mile long, lay Union troops commanded by Major General George H. Thomas, Jr., of the IV Corps, Army of the Cumberland. What else Hood saw through his

This postwar image made south of Franklin, Tennessee, shows the ground over which John Bell Hood's Confederates moved to attack Union forces dug in around the town on November 30, 1864.

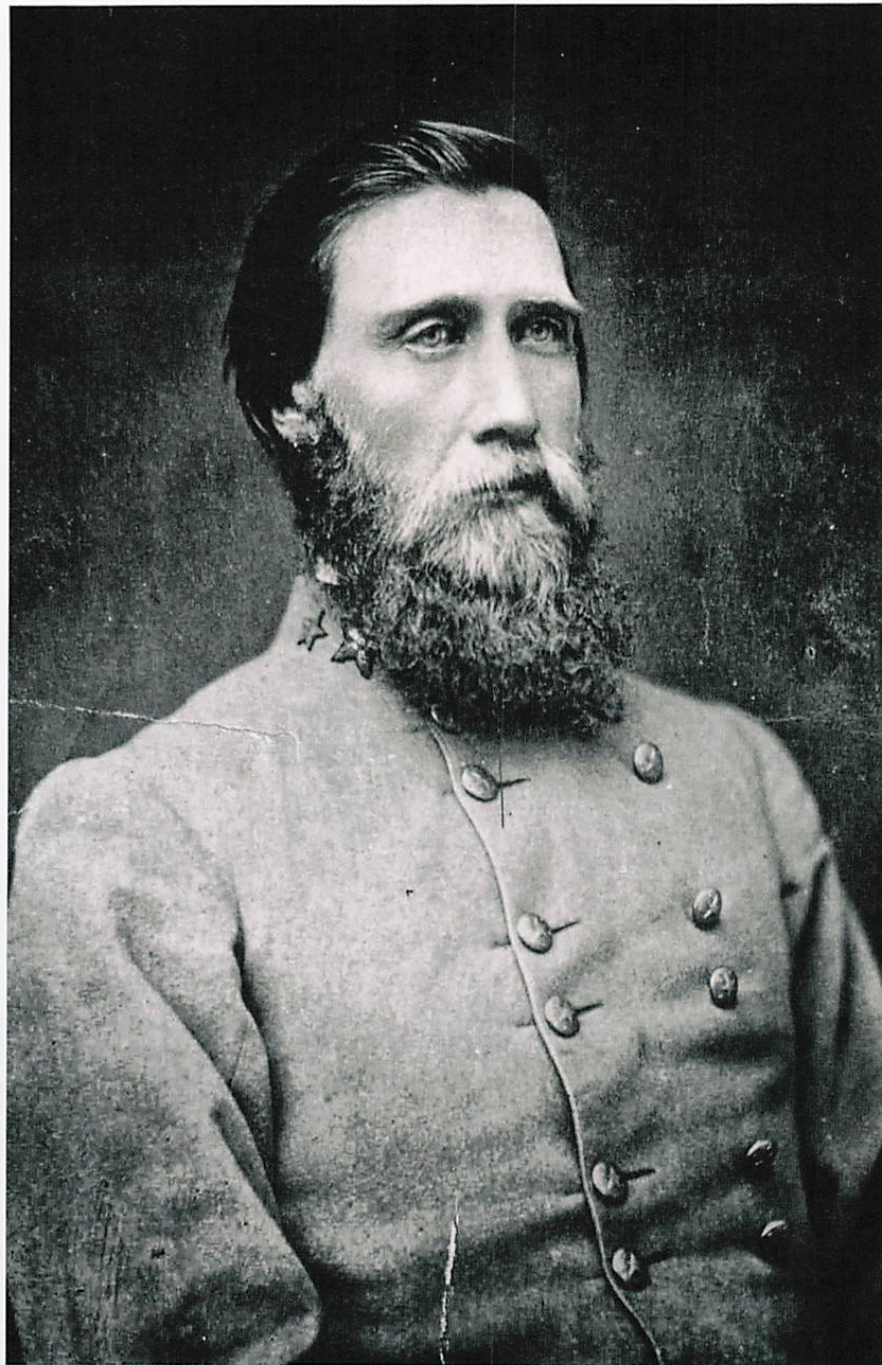
General John Bell Hood rode up a low hill outside the picturesque town and dug in along a curved line of fieldworks, abatis, and natural obstacles. General John M. Schofield, chiefly the XXIII Corps, Army of the Ohio, and field glasses was an opportunity. A line of advance entrenchments lay between

THE RETREAT FROM PULASKI TO NASHVILLE, TENN. (1909)

the approaching Confederate columns and the town. In Franklin itself, confusion reigned as a traffic jam of wagon trains attempted to pull back across the Harpeth River, and beyond that, to the relative safety of Federal-occupied Nashville, where the forces of the overall Union commander, Major General George H. Thomas, waited.¹ Hood also felt a sense of urgency. The Federals had retreated again and again in recent days, falling back on their lines of communication with Nashville to forestall the Confederates' efforts to flank them and not offering a stand-up fight. And yet Hood had good reason to be impatient with his own army. The night before, Major General Benjamin F. Cheatham's corps missed a golden opportunity to defeat the enemy at Spring Hill. It was now after 2 p.m., and only a few hours of daylight remained. If the Confederates meant to strike here and crush Schofield before he could reach Nashville, there was no time to lose. "We will make the fight," Hood pronounced.²

Brigadier General George D. Wagner, leading the 2nd Division of Major General David S. Stanley's IV Corps, had drawn the unenviable duty of commanding the Federal rearguard on its harrowing march the night before from Spring Hill to Franklin. Wagner, 35, hailed from Warren County, Indiana, and before the war had been a farmer and Republican state representative and senator, prominent in state politics. He owed his initial military appointment to political influence, but his rise in command stemmed from his competence at Perryville, Stones River, and during the Atlanta Campaign. He had a reputation as a fighter, and though he lacked formal military training, he was a gritty, tough-as-nails general, respected by his peers. According to Brigadier General Jacob D. Cox, who had recently assumed command of the XXIII Corps, Wagner "had seen a good deal of active field service, and under a rough exterior had a generous and genial character."³

By the fall of 1864, Wagner's command consisted of three brigades: Colonel Emerson Opdycke's 1st Brigade, the 2nd Brigade under Colonel John Q. Lane, and Colonel Joseph Conrad's 3rd Brigade. Opdycke's six regiments of Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin men were experienced veterans, but the other brigades consisted of many recent recruits and conscripts. Of the three, Opdycke's was the best, and its colonel was certainly one of the most capable combat leaders in Schofield's Army of the Ohio. Opdycke was 34, the son and grandson of soldiers. Born in Hubbard, Ohio, he had owned a variety of business enterprises in Warren before the war. Like Wagner, Opdycke lacked formal military training, but by now the ardently



antislavery colonel had compiled a glittering combat record and demonstrated natural leadership as well as iron discipline among his men.

Starting as a junior officer in the 41st Ohio Infantry, commanded by West Pointer and disciplinarian Colonel William B. Hazen, Opdycke proved to be an excellent officer, even instructing fellow officers in drill and tactics. Opdycke fought bravely at Shiloh, but left the regiment in September 1862 to help recruit the 125th Ohio Infantry, in which he would earn promotion to colonel. Opdycke's men won renown for their ferocity during the Army of the Cumberland's desperate stand at the Battle of Chickamauga in 1863, where they "fought like tigers" according to his division commander. Opdycke led a "demi-brigade" in the as-

The Union and Confederate forces that clashed at Franklin both felt a sense of urgency. Union general John M. Schofield (above right) hoped to complete his army's retreat from pursuing Rebels and make it to Nashville, where Major General George Thomas and his army were positioned. Confederate general John Bell Hood (above) hoped to catch up with and crush Schofield's troops before they could escape.

► To view this article's reference notes, turn to page 70.



sault on Missionary Ridge in November, and was among the first to reach the summit of the ridge. He was badly wounded at the Battle of Resaca in the Atlanta Campaign, but took command of the brigade after the death of the well-regarded Colonel Charles G. Harker at Kennesaw Mountain in June 1864. Abrasive and fiercely ambitious, Opdycke greatly coveted a general's star, telling his wife in October 1864, "my promotion would have been certain, had I been in command of a brigade [at Chickamauga]. If I ever *do* have command of one, and *then* opportunity offers, I will make you the wife of a General!"⁴ Opdycke's drive, coupled with a hot temper, made for a volatile combination only countered by his abilities as an exceptional combat officer.

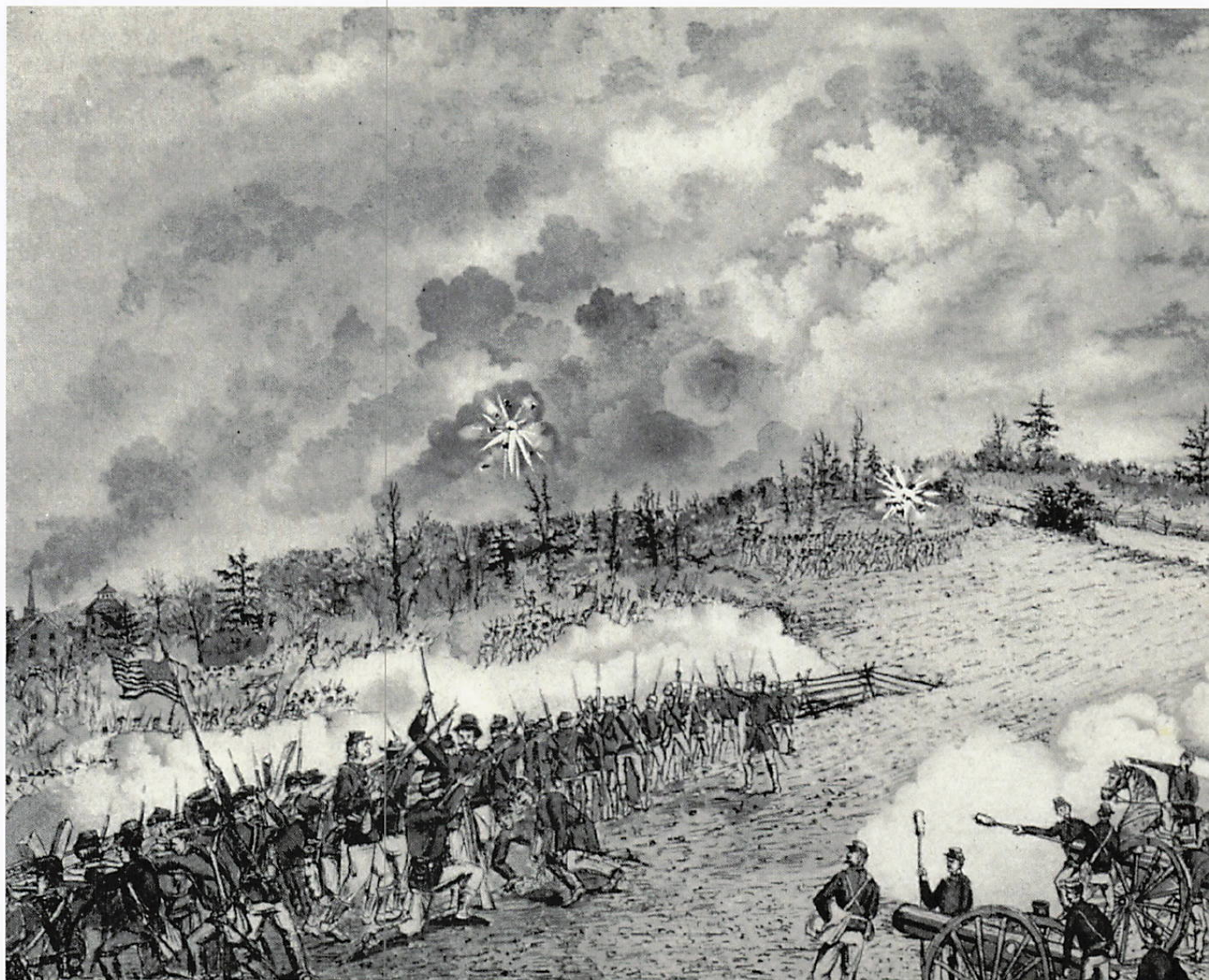
As a IV Corps division commander, Wagner reported to Stanley in the chain of command, but

while in charge of the army's rearguard, he also answered directly to Schofield, the overall commander in the field. Tensions permeated the army's command structure, as Cox later reported. "A very natural esprit de corps led some worthy men who served in Wagner's division to question the justice of the criticism upon his handling of the division in the battle," Cox would say years later, and some sensed "a disposition on the part of General Schofield and other officers of the Twenty-third corps to be unfriendly to him." Cox dismissed allegations of an anti-Wagner bias, yet it is possible that on the morning of November 30 there may have been some tension between Wagner and Schofield. Certainly after that day, friction erupted among Wagner, Stanley, and their subordinates.⁵

The source of Wagner's present frustration stemmed from his role in the army's desperate withdrawal the day before from the village of Spring Hill to Franklin. Stanley's lead troops, including Wagner's division, had begun to arrive at Spring Hill in the early afternoon of November 29. Stanley immediately ordered Wagner to rush his brigades forward to the town and shore up the defenses against the approaching threat of Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalry. Opdycke's brigade advanced at a run, taking up a blocking position on a slight ridge north of town. Lane's brigade slid into line on Opdycke's right, and Brigadier General Luther Bradley's brigade entrenched on a knoll southeast of Spring Hill, isolated from the main Federal line but occupying high ground. Forrest's men assaulted Bradley's line, wounding him; thus was Conrad elevated to brigade command.⁶ Confederate command confusion that night provided the Federals with just enough time to slip through Spring Hill, practically under the noses of Hood's army.

With disaster averted, Schofield's army was still beleaguered. Facing steady skirmishing from Forrest's pursuing cavalry, Wagner's division had no chance to pause, rest, or prepare rations all that long and weary night. Opdycke's 1st Brigade occupied the hindmost position in the rearguard, perhaps the hardest duty in the division, and Opdycke had the grueling duty of rounding up stragglers all night, sometimes at bayonet point. Consequently, the 1st Brigade had made the trek from Spring Hill to Franklin in line of battle formation and were as hungry and perhaps even more exhausted than their companion brigades. Wagner and his commanders had reason to wonder if they were being singled out for the worst assignment in the campaign, and Opdycke felt he had drawn the shortest straw of all.

Cox, who had ridden ahead and spent the remainder of the night and next morning preparing defenses, had his men incorporate preexisting earthworks around the town, previously



constructed in 1863, into a formidable complex. With dawn still a couple of hours away, the Federal army approached. Franklin, population about 2,000 in 1860, was situated on a bend in the Harpeth River, the last big obstacle the Federals had to negotiate in their withdrawal to safety. Schofield pressed ahead, overtaking Cox's lead division on Columbia Pike, the main road leading north through Franklin to Nashville. After pausing to converse with him, a weary Schofield entrusted the disposition of the army's defenses at Franklin to Cox.⁷

As soon as the Federal columns began arriving in town, the men were set to work repairing and digging new earthworks for the coming showdown. They cut down trees and thickets, gathered scrap wood, brush, and other debris, including several plows, and dismantled a cotton gin and other outbuildings of the Carter House just south of town—anything to add to the defensive position. When they were finished, the works consisted of a shallow trench 2-to-3 feet deep and 4 feet wide, rising to a low barrier 4 feet high. Behind

the barrier, defending troops were positioned in another 3-to-4-foot-deep trench and aimed their weapons through gaps in head logs and other debris atop the works, between 7 and 8 feet high. Aiding the defenses was a thick, thorny locust grove, which the men used to construct abatis, guarding the center-right of the Federal line just north of Columbia Pike.⁸ The defenses also benefited from a thick, tall hedge of Osage orange trees and man-made abatis, both presenting an imposing barrier on the Federal center and left.⁹

With both flanks anchored on the river, most of the Federal line enjoyed a relatively clear field of fire across the gently undulating slope and open ground facing south, the Confederates' most likely avenue of approach. To amplify the Federals' firepower, batteries of IV Corps artillery deployed along the line.¹⁰ Just across the river, in the Federal rear, another battery of 3-inch rifled guns jutted from Fort Granger, trained down in a commandingly high position with clear fields of fire. Elsewhere, when possible, batteries occupied higher ground that permitted

Above: Union and Confederate troops clash at Spring Hill on November 29, 1864. Confederate command confusion that night helped allow the Union force to slip away and resume its march toward Franklin. Emerson Opdycke's brigade, which formed the hindmost position of the Union rearguard, would spend an exhausting night and early morning keeping their retreating comrades moving.



them to fire over the heads of their infantry on the main defensive line.¹¹ By 2 p.m. on November 30, the works were substantially complete, and the army trains were mostly across the Harpeth. Schofield's final task would be to consolidate his army behind those formidable works before the Army of Tennessee arrived.

By about 11 a.m. Wagner's rearguard columns had reached the vicinity of Winstead Hill, 10 miles from Spring Hill and 2 miles south of Franklin along Columbia Pike. Just then a courier from Stanley arrived with orders for Wagner to halt his division, and let the men eat breakfast and rest. Wagner allowed Conrad's and Lane's brigades to fall out and cook rations atop nearby Breezy Hill, but Opdycke and his weary brigade would have no respite. According to Wagner's report:

I placed Colonel Opdycke's brigade in position in the gap [between Breezy and Winstead hills] and on the high point east of the pike, with a section of artillery, to check the advance of the enemy, who was pursuing us at this time—Colonel Lane's brigade being put in position on Colonel Opdycke's left, and Colonel Conrad going into line to the left of Colonel Lane, General Whitaker's brigade, of the First Division, occupying the heights on the right of the pike. The enemy soon appeared in our front in heavy force, and the command was put under arms to be ready to repel an attack.¹²

While Wagner deployed his three brigades along Breezy Hill, Brigadier General Walter C. Whitaker, commanding the 2nd Brigade of Brigadier General Nathan Kimball's First Division, IV Corps, took cover behind makeshift barriers atop Winstead Hill. For about an hour the four brigades withstood long-range skirmishing from Confederate cavalry; Whitaker received orders to march to Franklin "when the road should be clear."¹³ Wagner, without positive orders since Stanley's 11 a.m. instructions to halt and feed his men, became concerned at Whitaker's withdrawal. Perhaps thinking that similar instructions to pull back had been issued to him but somehow went astray, Wagner took it upon himself to abandon Breezy Hill and put his division on the road to town.¹⁴

With Wagner's division soon strung out in a mile-and-a-half-long column, one of Stanley's staff officers appeared with further orders:

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH ARMY CORPS,
Franklin, Tenn., November 30, 1864—11.30 a.m.

Brigadier-General Wagner,
Commanding Second Division:

The general commanding directs that you hold the heights you now occupy until dark, unless too severely pressed; that you relieve Colonel Opdycke with one of your brigades, and leave his and the remaining brigade as a support; and that you cross the river to the north bank after dark,

at which time the position you are to occupy will be pointed out to you.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
[J. S. Fullerton]
Assistant Adjutant-General.¹⁵

Wagner was about half a mile from the Federal works girding the south of town when the 11:30 a.m. orders from Stanley arrived. It is possible that at some point that morning Opdycke went over Wagner's head and complained directly to Stanley about his brigade's treatment, evidenced by Stanley's specific instructions to relieve Opdycke of his onerous duty.¹⁶ Cox, who was in a position to know, surmised that "[t]his was an unusual interference with the discretion of a division commander having his whole division in hand, and indicates some chafing between him [Wagner] and his subordinates which made the action of the corps commander necessary."¹⁷ Wagner had little time to argue the point, nor to chastise Opdycke for going around him in the chain of command. "In obedience to [Stanley's] order I returned to the position from which I had just withdrawn my command, except that I now detached one regiment from Colonel Lane's brigade and directed it to be placed on the heights to the right of the pike [Winstead Hill] from which General Whitaker had just withdrawn his brigade," Wagner reported.¹⁸ For better or worse, Stanley's 11:30 a.m. orders remained the operative instructions guiding most of Wagner's actions. To muddy affairs further, Wagner had, at 12:15 p.m., sent a courier of his own to Stanley, expressing his intention to withdraw from Breezy Hill. Stanley, operating under the premise that Cox now outranked him in command of forces on the field, declined to respond to Wagner's message with additional instructions and reasoned that his 11:30 a.m. order remained in effect. Wagner was, in those orders, expected to "hold the heights ... until dark, unless too severely pressed."¹⁹

Opdycke, whose 1st Brigade had only just left its position between the hills, had to about face his men immediately and return. Lane and Conrad were also countermarched and returned to their previous positions on Breezy Hill, though Lane detached a single regiment to occupy the place Whitaker previously occupied on Winstead Hill. This apparent vacillation no doubt increased Opdycke's frustration with Wagner. When Opdycke got his footsore brigade into position, he was greeted with a terrifying sight: two Confederate corps bearing down in "heavy and parallel columns of infantry, approaching rapidly," one along Columbia Pike in his front, and the other on his left flank, along the Lewisburg Pike.²⁰ The IV Corps journal kept by Stanley's chief of staff confirmed that at noon, "Colonel Opdycke reaches the high knoll [Winstead Hill]

two miles from Franklin; here he halts, and General Wagner is ordered to hold him in this position and support him with his other two brigades until he is seriously threatened by a superior force of infantry.”²¹ While Opdycke anxiously watched the approaching Confederate columns—and sent word of them to Wagner—an enemy sharpshooter’s minie ball struck his horse, narrowly missing the colonel’s thigh.²²

According to Wagner: “These dispositions were scarcely completed when Colonel Opdycke sent a messenger to report to me that the enemy was moving two heavy columns of infantry against our line, one by each of the two pikes leading into Franklin, one column turning my left flank.”²³ Furthermore, as recorded in the IV Corps headquarters journal, “1 p.m., General Wagner reports two large columns of the enemy’s infantry approaching Colonel Opdycke’s position, moving on the Lewisburg and Columbia pikes, and, as he cannot successfully resist the forces, he is moving his division within the bridge-head constructed by General Cox around the town of Franklin.”²⁴

Wagner, based on his understanding of Stanley’s earlier instructions, believed that his orders were, first, to hold Winstead and Breezy Hills as long as tenable, and second, to block the Confederates’ advance, short of allowing his command to be overwhelmed. He intended to carry out those orders, namely, by alternately deploying and passing his brigades in a continuation of his earlier rearguard action. There is no indication that Wagner initially intended to make a permanent stand beyond the main Federal line.²⁵ He could see that by 2 p.m. at least two Confederate corps were bearing down on the Federal position at Franklin. With the arrival of Hood’s army, Wagner’s tired brigades could not hope to hold back such overwhelming numbers if pressed, nor could they maintain possession of the two hills. Faced with these developments, Wagner could have interpreted his orders more expansively while remaining true to Stanley’s 11:30 a.m. in-

structions. He could have withdrawn to the relative safety of the Federal line, reported to Stanley or Cox, and participated in the impending battle based on new orders. Wagner’s three brigades would have added tremendously to Federal power within the defensive line.

Wagner instead chose to implement a phased withdrawal to delay the impending Confederate assault—a classic rearguard action. Should the Breezy Hill-Winstead Hill position become untenable, he had the chance to fall back and improvise a new and temporary defensive line somewhere between the hills and the town. This had the potential to buy the Federal army valuable time to continue its preparations, withdraw its remaining wagons over the river, and give the Confederates pause, possibly even disrupting the timing of any potential assault. If Hood’s approach was merely a demonstration, then nothing serious would be lost in the effort. This course of action would also fulfill Wagner’s ongoing responsibility to serve as the army’s rearguard, a role he had pursued with dogged determination since leaving Spring Hill the night before.

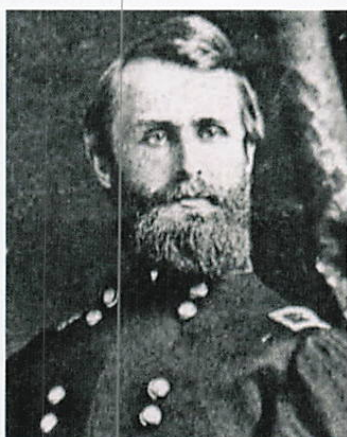
When Opdycke’s message about the enemy’s proximity to Winstead Hill reached him, Wagner acted quickly. He reported:

I thereupon again withdrew my command and retired toward the main line of our troops, which surrounded the town, and sent an officer of my staff to notify General Stanley of my movement. I directed Colonel Lane’s brigade and a section of artillery to go into position on the hill [Privet Knob] to the right of the pike, about one mile north of Stevens’ [Winstead] Hill, where he remained skirmishing with the enemy till his right flank was about to be turned, when I directed him to leave a heavy line of skirmishers to hold the hill as long as possible, and to withdraw his brigade and go into position on the right of the Third Brigade, which had been formed on the left of the pike about 400 yards in advance of our main line, at the same time placing a section of artillery on the pike between these two brigades.²⁶

Lane’s 2nd Brigade and the section from Battery G,



Major General
David S. Stanley



Brigadier General
Jacob D. Cox

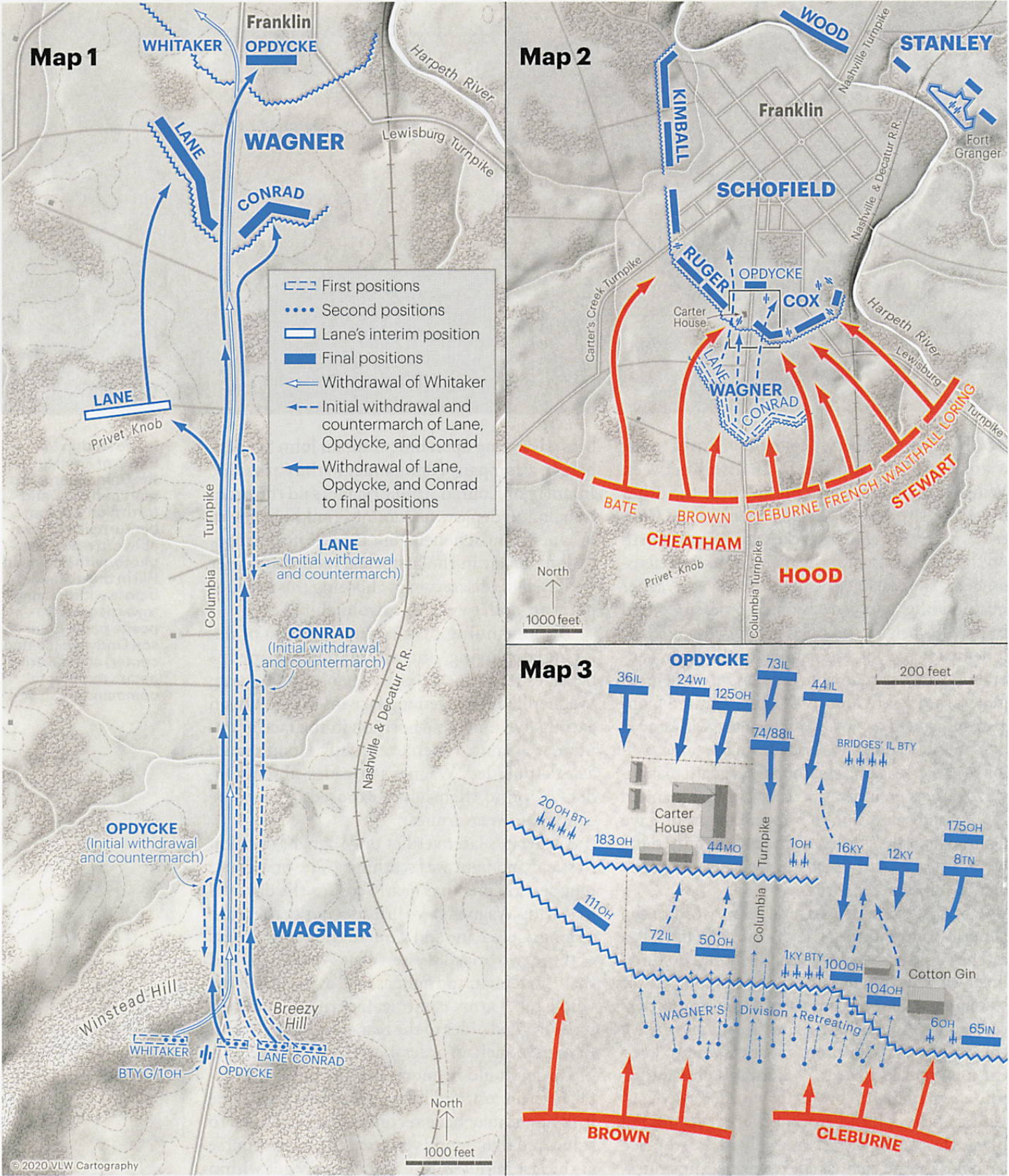


Brigadier General
George D. Wagner



Colonel
Joseph Conrad

Withdrawing toward Franklin on the morning of November 30, 1864, the rearguard of John M. Schofield's Union force—commanded by George D. Wagner and consisting of the brigades of Walter C. Whitaker, John Q. Lane, Joseph Conrad, and Emerson Opdycke—withdrew from its positions on Winstead and Breezy hills only to be ordered to return, minus Whitaker (Map 1). Advancing Confederates soon pushed them back toward Franklin; Opdycke withdrew into town while Lane and Conrad eventually settled into a position south of the main Union line. The resulting battle saw Lane and Conrad driven back into Franklin (Map 2); a key advance by Opdycke would help turn back the Rebel breakthrough near the Carter House (Map 3).





1st Ohio Light Artillery, deployed on Privet Knob, a stony hill 75 to 100 feet tall halfway between Winstead Hill and Franklin, to cover the other brigades' withdrawal. Wagner then pushed Conrad's 1st Brigade and Opdycke's 3rd Brigade north up the road, bound for the main Franklin defenses. Before he reached the town, however, Wagner made another fateful decision: he ordered Conrad to post his brigade on open ground about a half mile in advance of and parallel to the main Federal works. Evidently Wagner wanted Conrad's brigade to deploy and screen the withdrawal of Opdycke's and Lane's brigades in the same fashion as earlier—again, a textbook rearguard maneuver. There is no indication that Wagner planned for Conrad's new line to be permanent; he gave Conrad no orders to entrench, and permitted the weary brigade to rest in place, awaiting Opdycke's arrival as instructed earlier.²⁷

Conrad was confused, and "sent word to the general commanding the division [Wagner] to ask him if it was expected that I should hold the line I was then on, but just as the staff officer was starting the general came up and gave me orders to hold the line as long as possible, and to have the sergeants to fix their bayonets and to keep the men to their places."²⁸ Conrad's position afforded virtually no protection or defensive advantage; though the ground there rose and fell in gentle swells, it was a terribly exposed place to make a stand against the overwhelming num-

bers advancing upon him. Captain John Shellenberger, a company commander in the 64th Ohio Infantry of Conrad's 2nd Brigade, said the order to halt and deploy in front of Franklin came to Wagner from Schofield, but there is no corroboration of that in the historical record. Wagner exercised his discretion in choosing this advance position, and it was a disastrous choice.²⁹

By continuing his rearguard action of delaying, deploying, and alternately passing his brigades from one defensive pause to the next, Wagner had managed to place his division in an extremely vulnerable position in the face of imminent assault. When eventually Hood's main attack unfolded, Wagner's brigades, absent Opdycke, found themselves exposed, soon to be caught between armies.³⁰

Opdycke's later verdict on Wagner's decision to stand and fight was scathing. "The first grand blunder and one that nearly cost us the day, was in leaving Wagner's two brigades out to the front so long. Col's Lane and Conrad the commanders of those two brigades assert that Wagner ordered them 'to remain and fight as long as possible if the whole rebel army came against them, and then retire in good order to the rear of the main works.' If W. gave such an order, he deserves to be hung. No order could be more foolish, wicked, or fatal, in their position."³¹ As Conrad would describe it, Wagner may have reconsidered his orders to stand and fight, and even tried to change course at the last minute. "Just as the enemy got within

In the leadup to the Battle of Franklin, the Union rearguard marched back and forth along Columbia Turnpike (shown above in a postwar photo, with Winstead Hill in the distance) before withdrawing toward town. Opposite page: Emerson Opdycke (seated center) and his brigade's regimental commanders.



good musket-range a staff officer of the general commanding the division [Wagner] rode up to me and said that the general ordered that if the enemy came on me too strong, and in such force as to overpower me, that I should retire my line to the rear," Conrad reported. "[B]ut as the enemy was so close to me, and as one-half my men were recruits and drafted men, and knowing that if I then retired my lines my men would become very unsteady and confused, and perhaps panic-stricken, I concluded to fight the enemy on the line I then was [on]...."³²

With Conrad in this precarious spot, Wagner next turned to the headstrong Opdycke, whose brigade had ridden up along Columbia Pike, and who fumed at the marching, countermarching, and what he saw as the mismanagement of the entire rearguard action. The relationship between them exploded in the open. Upon Opdycke's approach, Wagner ordered the colonel to extend Conrad's right, west of Columbia Pike. Lane's 2nd Brigade, upon leaving Privet Knob, would fall in as well, probably on Conrad's left, thus completing the advanced position as Wagner conceived it. Opdycke recognized the inadvisability of this deployment and "strenuously objected to this order." In his opinion, which he voiced to Wagner in full view of his men, the division's deployment "out on the open plain in front of the breastworks were in a good position to aid the enemy, and nobody else." Opdycke added that his brigade, "while covering the rear of our

retreating column, in line of battle, climbing over fences and passing through woods, thickets, and muddy cornfields ... was entitled to a relief and an opportunity for rest and refreshment."³³

As the officers' exchange grew more heated, Opdycke's brigade, absent orders, kept marching along the pike and on past Wagner's intended line. Wagner, who had earlier fallen from his horse and injured his leg, was already in a bad mood; Opdycke, not known for gentleness himself, had reached the limit of his patience.³⁴ The men continued to dispute as they rode along the pike at the head of Opdycke's column. Eventually they found themselves passing through the main Federal line at Franklin in a scene that must have amazed onlookers. "The ground there being fully occupied by other troops, they kept along until they came to the first clear space, about one hundred yards inside the breastworks," Captain Shellenberger recalled. Captain Edward G. Whitesides of Wagner's staff recounted in a postwar correspondence:

I was with Genl Wagoner [sic] when he met Genl Opdycke marching at the head of his brigade on the pike some distance beyond the point where the 2nd & 3rd Brigades had been placed in position. Wagoner directed Opdycke to prolong the line of the 3rd Brigade, Opdycke remonstrated, claiming his men had been up all night, and had no breakfast, and the position was untenable. The discussion was continued until the head of Opdyckes Column had passed in rear of the line, outside the works, Wagoner seemingly acquiesc-

ing in Opdycke's view of the matter, and without halting Opdycke moved on and placed his Command in position to rest and get breakfast at the first favorable place he could find inside the works.³⁵

Sometime in the exchange, Wagner accused Opdycke of insubordination, but Opdycke refused to back down over what he no doubt considered his superior's absurd orders. By the end of their debate, it was too late to order Opdycke's brigade into line with Conrad. Wagner snapped at him, "Well, Opdycke, fight when and where you damn please. We all know you'll fight."³⁶

● ●
Had Opdycke followed Wagner's orders, he would not only have risked the well-being of his brigade, but would also have contributed to a command decision he judged incorrect. As Wagner's subordinate, he was obliged to carry out orders to the best of his ability unless extraordinary circumstances indicated otherwise.

An open act of insubordination in the face of the enemy could have had dire consequences for Opdycke's career and reputation, as well as for the morale and discipline of the men in Wagner's division. Still, relying on his own judgment and experience, the strong-willed colonel marched his men through the gap in the main Federal line on Columbia Pike.

As Opdycke led his men toward Franklin, he observed a vulnerability in the Federal defenses. With the need to keep Columbia Pike open until the last possible moment before a Confederate attack, Cox had prudently ordered that a gap remain in the line stretching across the road just south and east of the Carter House. The gap was guarded by a retrenchment, or a second line of works parallel to and behind the main Federal line, and covered by additional artillery. The retrenchment forced traffic on Columbia Pike to detour in a sharp turnout, slowing but not prohibiting the flow of wagons, animals, and men to the rear. However, that also offered assaulting Confederates a point at which to breach the Fed-

The men of Emerson Opdycke's brigade marched past the Carter House on Columbia Pike as they withdrew into Franklin. The subsequent fighting would swirl around the structure, which is pictured below in a postwar image.



THE RETREAT FROM PULASKI TO NASHVILLE, TENN. (1909)

eral line. The retrenchment also left Wagner's rearguard, still operating out in front of the defensive works, in jeopardy and without a clear line of retreat to safety. And it risked cutting off any remaining wagons, stragglers, or other latecomers still outside the perimeter and with the Confederate army on their heels.³⁷ Noting this hazard, Opdycke marched his men until they reached a clear area about 200 yards behind the Carter House hill. There, at about 2:30 p.m., Opdycke ordered his men to stack arms, gather wood, and finally have coffee and breakfast while remaining in reserve. And, as noted earlier, Opdycke reported, "General Wagner was with me in person, and ordered me to fight when and where I thought I should be most needed without further orders.... I was familiar with the whole ground and knew that Carter's hill was the key to it all."³⁸ Coincidentally, the 125th Ohio had garrisoned in Franklin earlier that year and Opdycke was indeed quite familiar with the town and its topography.

Though Wagner came under harsh criticism for his actions that day, there was a certain logic to his reasoning. Rather than simply surrendering possession of the hills in front of Franklin and falling back to a safer position behind Federal lines, Wagner had authority to exercise discretion as a division commander and continue his blocking action from the previous night. As the army's rearguard, he had primary responsibility for screening its withdrawal, buying time to prepare its defenses, and keeping Hood at arm's length as long as possible. Should the Breezy Hill-Winstead Hill position become untenable, Wagner had time and space to fall back and improvise a new and temporary defensive line between the hills and the town. Doing so would spare the Federal army precious time to continue its preparations; a stiff resistance might also give the Confederates pause, possibly even disrupt the timing of an assault before nightfall. Cox believed the approaching Confederate columns that had provoked such anxiety all morning were merely a demonstration intended to distract the Federals from a more devious flanking maneuver. "It was evident that Hood was deploying," Cox said, "but it might be only for the purpose of encamping in line of battle just beyond the range of projectiles, as he had done at Columbia before beginning his flanking movement."³⁹ A feint on Hood's part would fit the pattern of previous days, while a frontal assault would be a deviation, at least for this campaign.

Cox, and probably Opdycke, believed Wagner would eventually withdraw his division into the works at Franklin before any potential Confederate assault. It is not certain that either man shared this assumption with Wagner, or whether Wagner agreed that he ought to maintain an advance position, or whether it should be temporary or permanent. Cox did leave it up to Wag-

ner to choose his own course of action for the balance of his division, and thought that meant withdrawal to safety. Cox, in his postwar analysis of the battle, exonerated himself for not intervening in Wagner's course of action, and maintained that Wagner's passing of brigades "was one which any competent division commander handling a rear guard is presumed to be familiar with, and for which he should need neither instruction nor suggestion from his corps commander."⁴⁰ It is certain that Wagner and Cox were not on the same page that afternoon.

After their heated exchange, Wagner left Opdycke to his brigade and rode up the hill to the Carter House. Soon he was intercepted by a courier from Lane, still holding on at Privet Knob, who warned that he was about to be flanked by approaching Confederates. Wagner immediately sent Lane instructions to fall back with his artillery and join Conrad, and then rode out to the advance position.⁴¹ There he found that although Conrad had thrown out skirmishers, the brigade had not entrenched. Not having been instructed to do so, Conrad was under the impression his position was a temporary one. Then, at some point between 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m., without consultation or confirmation from Stanley, Cox, or Schofield, Wagner decided to make the position permanent, knowing the Confederates would quite possibly make a grand assault on Franklin soon. As Conrad put it, "[G]eneral [Wagner] came up and gave me orders to hold the line as long as possible, and to have the sergeants to fix their bayonets and to keep the men to their places. I accordingly gave the same instructions to my regimental commanders, and believing an attack would soon be made on my line, I ordered my regimental commanders to build a line of works in front of their regiments, respectively. About 3:30 p.m., and as the men were very busily engaged in throwing up a work, the enemy, who had been forming his lines in front of my lines, commenced advancing on us."⁴² Lane's brigade soon began filing into place. Wagner's window for changing his mind had closed; an orderly withdrawal was no longer realistic. With his dispositions made, Wagner rode back to the Carter House.⁴³

As the Confederates drew near Conrad and Lane, the sound of musketry intensified from the front. Messengers from the advance position soon reported to Wagner that Conrad and Lane were about to be overwhelmed. A staff officer told Wagner, "The enemy are forming in heavy columns; we can see them distinctly in the open timber and all along our front," to which Wagner retorted, "Stand there and fight them." When a Cox staffer protested that Wagner's "orders [were] not to stand, except against cavalry and skirmishers, but to fall back behind the main line if a general engagement is threatened," Wagner appar-



ently ignored him. Another officer, this time from Stanley's staff, warned, "But Hood's entire army is coming." Wagner, leaning on a stick to help his injured leg, slammed the ground and stubbornly declared, "Never mind; fight them." A third staff officer recalled Wagner saying, "Go back ... and tell them to fight—fight like hell!"⁴⁴

As Opdycke had feared, Wagner's advance position could not withstand the weight of the Confederate attack. Soon the retreating men of Conrad's and Lane's shattered brigades began pouring into the main line of works, funneling through the retrenchment, mixing with the Federal defenders and, for a time, obstructing their fields of fire. The Confederates of Major General Patrick R. Cleburne's and Major General John C. Brown's divisions were right on their heels. "We go right after them, yelling like fury, and shooting at them at the same time," said an officer of Cleburne's command. "The Yanks [were] running for life and we for the fun of it, but the difference in the objects are so great that they out run us, but lose quite a number of their men before they get [away]."⁴⁵ Confederate officers urged their men to follow the fleeing Federals into the works. To Wagner's credit, he leaped into action. "Wagner by this time was on his horse riding backward and facing the disorganized brigades," recalled Cox's staffer, Captain Levi Scofield, "trying as hard as ever a man did to rally them. With terrible oaths he called them cowards, and shook his broken stick at them; but back they went to the town, and nothing could stop them."⁴⁶ As Cleburne's and Brown's troops crashed through Wagner's advance position, the defenses beyond the Carter House and across Columbia Pike also began to crumble. Soon the main defensive line between the cotton gin and the Carter House was breached. Broken Federal regiments, screaming and dying men and horses, and shouting Confederates with fixed bayonets boiled through the yard.⁴⁷

A crisis was at hand for the Federal army—and Opdycke was there. Once he had reached his reserve position behind the Carter House, he was prepared to comply with Cox's request "to have my brigade ready."⁴⁸ When the firing south of town intensified, Opdycke ordered his men into formation, then began moving the 44th Illinois Infantry, the 73rd Illinois Infantry, and the consolidated 74th/88th Illinois Infantry east across Columbia Pike. The noise from the assault was so intense by then that

officers had great difficulty getting their men to hear shouted orders. The stampede of stragglers contributed to the chaos, and in the confusion, Major Thomas W. Motherspaw, commanding the next-in-line 73rd Illinois Infantry, watched for an instant in disbelief as his men began advancing without orders. Confused, he simply shouted, "Go for them, Boys," and mounted his horse. With a yell, the 73rd Illinois leveled their bayonets and rushed forward as Motherspaw cried, "Forward, 73d, to the works!" The 125th Ohio, Opdycke's old outfit, saw the regiments across the pike advancing, and assumed that they must have failed to hear an order to move the entire brigade forward to the retrenchment. Opdycke was equally confused, watching in amazement as half of his brigade launched an impromptu assault. He sent an aide to try to halt Motherspaw's advance, but it proved pointless; the 73rd Illinois was already on its way to join the other regiments headed for the breach.⁴⁹

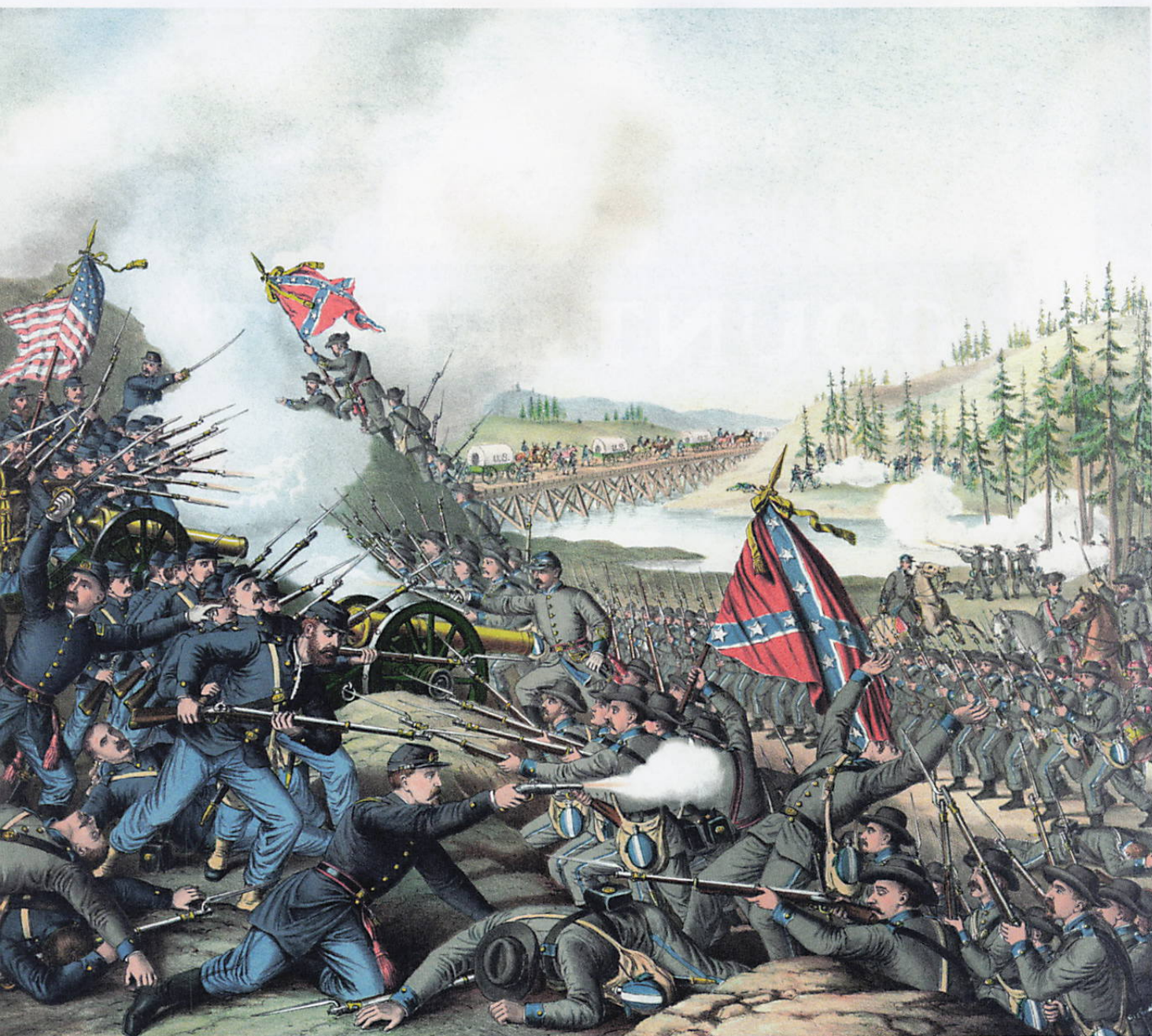
As Opdycke explained it later, a preternatural calm quickly settled over him. "[A]n awful pell mell stampede came rushing to the rear through my ranks. I was not surprised at it; I felt almost sure of some such disaster, when I knew those two brigades were to be left out there detached from other troops.... It was a fearful sight to see our whole front occupied by orderly masses of rebels, advancing rapidly, and in the most perfect order, following those two brigades right into the works." With Confederates forming up in the yard of the house, the breakthrough spreading, and the entire line in danger of rupturing, Opdycke collected himself and sprang into action.

His brigade was, perhaps, the last hope of stabilizing the hole in the line. "I had but just discovered that our troops had left the works, and the guns," said Opdycke, "when I saw the enemy crossing the works and rushing on: then I knew that everything depended upon the courage and valor of the 1st Brigade, and gave my order 'First Brigade forward to the works' down came the bayonets, and with long huzza's from the men, they rushed forward in one of the grandest charges I ever saw."⁵⁰ Along with regiments from

Brigadier General James W. Reilly's Third Division of the XXIII Corps, Opdycke's entire brigade, along with the 125th Ohio and 24th Wisconsin, plunged into the maelstrom. Running up Carter House hill and passing the Lotz House, the brigade saw mayhem unfolding before them. Brutal hand-to-hand fighting broke out as the 1st Brigade columns enveloped the Carter House vicinity. A strong cedar fence proved an imposing



Above: While historically inaccurate, Kurz & Allison's chromolithograph of the Battle of Franklin does allude to the ferocity of the fighting, which was hand-to-hand in many places. Left: Major General Patrick R. Cleburne, whose division of Confederates helped breach the Union line near the Carter House.



barrier, nearly impervious to rifle butts or hands, but Opdycke's men would not be deterred. Fighting with bayonets, swords, knives, hatchets, and even fists and feet, the melee was one of the most savage the men who survived it could remember. "Opdycke was in the thickest of it," remembered Cox, "and, after he had emptied his revolver at the enemy, he used it clubbed till it was broken."⁵¹ At one point Opdycke even snatched up a musket and used it as a cudgel. It was, according to a brigade sergeant, the "hardest, bloodiest, and most wicked fight I was ever in."⁵²

Opdycke's timely charge occurred in echelon, a staggered formation designed to strike the enemy with successive blows, with the brigade commander arriving first, as "circumstances made this the best and most suitable of all possible movements, for the break commenced at the pike, and then kept increasing in both directions." Opdycke's intervention began to seal the

breach at the Columbia Pike retrenchment first, then "the other regiments came up successively, just in the right time; as my last regiments occupied the works, the break was stopped."⁵³ Leading the 24th Wisconsin, 19-year old Major Arthur MacArthur, future father of a legendary World War II general, had his horse shot from under him in the Carter House yard. MacArthur picked himself up, brandished his sword, and kept going; he was then shot three times and sabered an enemy officer carrying a Confederate flag. The audacious Major Motherspaw was mortally wounded in the fight, along with a total of 18 officers and 217 enlisted men from Opdycke's brigade.⁵⁴

Similar scenes of desperate combat played out up and down the line, with men fighting and dying as the constant thunder of muskets, pistols, and artillery rattled the bullet-pocked walls of the Carter family homestead. Opdycke's men loaded muskets and passed them for- ➤ CONT. ON P. 67

COUNTERFEIT



AS THE NOTION OF SECTIONAL RECONCILIATION SPREAD
IN THE DECADES AFTER THE CONFLICT, IMPOSTORS SHOWED UP
WITH INVENTED WARTIME HISTORIES BY ADAM H. DOMBY

CONFEDERATES

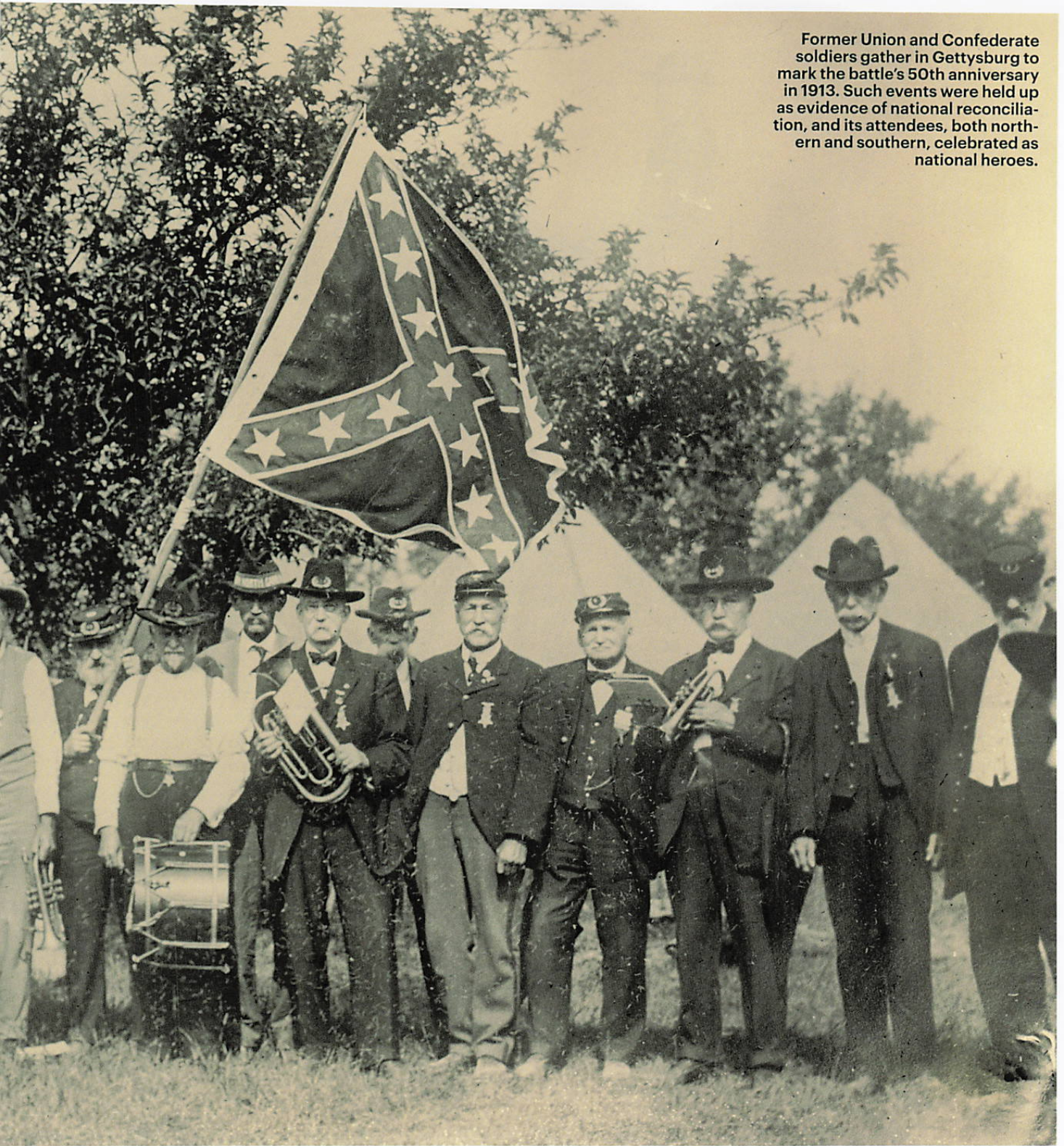


This group portrait shows the attendees of the United Confederate Veterans Tennessee Division reunion held in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in September 1928. Before and well into the 20th century, not all the men who claimed to have served in the Confederate army were telling the truth.



"I WAS JUST A SOLDIER," RECOUNTED ANDREW HALL IN JANUARY 1943, "JUST ONE OF THE BOYS WHO FOUGHT AND SUFFERED as no other army has ever suffered." In the middle of World War II, as the Battle of Stalingrad raged on the other side of the world, Hall told a reporter of how, 80 years earlier, he and his Confederate comrades had suffered as "no other army." A longtime resident of Albion, New York, Hall was celebrating his 100th birthday, the paper reported, and seemed nostalgic for the fighting witnessed during the American Civil War. He reminisced about his "idol" Robert E. Lee who, along with Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, he considered "two of the best generals ever on a battlefield." Hall was a minor celebrity, upstate New York's last Confederate veteran (one Union veteran remained in the region). He told the reporter he believed the war would end that year with an Allied victory, but his prediction was off and he would not live to see the war end. He died in January 1945—just days before another birthday.¹ ■ Hall would be remembered primarily as a Confederate. His gravestone in the town's Mount Albion Cemetery was engraved "Confederate Army Civil War," and beginning in 1953 Confederate flags provided by a South Carolina postmaster were placed on his grave annually as a "highlight" of the town's ceremonies on Decoration Day—the holiday meant to

Former Union and Confederate soldiers gather in Gettysburg to mark the battle's 50th anniversary in 1913. Such events were held up as evidence of national reconciliation, and its attendees, both northern and southern, celebrated as national heroes.



celebrate those who died fighting for the United States against the Confederacy.² By 1958 it became local practice to place both an American and a Confederate flag on Hall's grave and those of five other former Confederates in Rochester, New York, area cemeteries as a sign of reconciliation.³ Such a decoration seen amid the nearby graves of Union army veterans might have implied that Confederate veterans had also fought for the United States, despite the fact that they explicitly fought *against* it. The small flag on Hall's grave in the middle of far northern New York was just a part of the reshaping of how North and South remembered the past. ■ Hall in his lifetime had often served as a symbol of sectional reconciliation. Indeed, he is representative of a time when elderly southerners were held up as heroes to facilitate a national healing that often purposely ignored the war's accomplishments, chief among them the enfranchisement of African Americans. As historian David Blight has argued, America in the decades after the Civil War was "a society committed to sectional reconciliation, even at the cost of forgetting the legacy and claims of its African American citizens."⁴ Hall facilitated this reconciliation, attending numerous local reunions held for Union veterans—always as the only Confederate there. At one Rochester reunion, he declared he had "long since forgot-



ten" the enmities of "the civil strife," seemingly rendering a catastrophic Civil War a minor conflict.⁵

There was one major problem with New York's "last Confederate": Andrew Hall was a fraud.

Hall had not fought under Lee or Jackson for the Confederacy. He hadn't fought at all. As one of his descendants put it, Hall had committed the "crime of stolen valor."⁶ First, he lied about his age. According to five state and federal census reports taken between 1892 and 1915, Hall was born in 1852—making him 13 years old when the war ended. During the 1920s he appears to have changed his age and claimed to be born around 1847, which was also when he began saying publicly that he was a Confederate veteran. Over the following decade, he aged even more and said he was born around 1843. By his death in 1945, he was reportedly two days away from his 102nd birthday.⁷ Even from the grave Hall's age continued to grow; a Confederate reenactor website honoring his grandson (who reenacted as a Confederate) states Hall lived to 103, making him a full decade older than his true age when he died.⁸ In 2016, Hall's granddaughter discovered the lies, removed his Confederate gravestone and replaced it with a simple marker that notes his birthdate as 1852.⁹

Hall's age was not the only thing about him that failed to pass muster—because he didn't

muster. In various accounts dating from 1928 to 1945, not only did his birth year change, but so did the year he claimed he enlisted, the unit he claimed to serve in, and the battles he claimed to have fought in.¹⁰ In 1928, he said he had joined a South Carolina regiment at age 15, after his father was killed in battle at Bull Run.¹¹ By 1933, he was telling reporters he had lost his father and seven brothers in the Confederate ranks (an eighth brother was wounded while serving in a Maryland unit, according to other reports).¹² Two years later he claimed to have entered the war and fought at Bull Run himself when he was 17.¹³ By 1943, Hall was asserting he had enlisted at 18 in April 1861. Though he routinely was noted as the only Confederate soldier present at New York veterans' reunions, there was no evidence of Hall ever enlisting in the Confederate army. The South Carolina hometown he claimed? It appears never to have existed. Interestingly, he apparently skipped the large 1938 Gettysburg reunion, where he might have run into former Confederates.¹⁴

Though it was fake, the nostalgia Hall reflected in his 1940s interview played on a growing sentiment in the United States that recalled a destructive war almost fondly. While the tales he told were made up, they played with expectations

By the early 20th century, the service and battlefield performance of ex-Confederates, from generals like Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson to common soldiers, were romanticized in accounts of the Civil War, sentiments that men who faked a connection to the conflict exploited to their benefit. Above left: Lee and his famed warhorse, Traveller. Right: The cover of an issue of *Confederate Veteran*, a magazine founded in the 1890s to honor ex-Confederates.

▶ To view this article's reference notes, turn to page 70.

that were central to romanticized (and often false) narratives about the war. His granddaughter recalled hearing about how he took care of General Lee's favorite horse, Traveller, and how Lee himself "removed a bullet from [Hall's body] right on the battlefield."¹⁵ Both tales seem improbable, given the lack of contemporary sources describing such events or Hall himself. But these tales complemented myths about Robert E. Lee as brilliant general and gentleman. They allowed upstate New Yorkers to feel connected to Lee—who by 1930 was increasingly recalled as not only a southern hero but also an American hero—despite his fighting against the United States. Hall's depictions of Lee and Jackson could have been torn from the pages of *Confederate Veteran*, a magazine founded in the 1890s to honor ex-Confederates and recount their accomplishments. And well they may have been. Other details in Hall's stories were similarly suspect. For example, he reportedly claimed to have been at the Battle of Gettysburg—despite the fact that the unit he claimed to have served in had not been there.¹⁶

In capitalizing on romanticized narratives of the Civil War, Hall was part of the massive revisioning of the war scholars often refer to as the Lost Cause narrative. Former Confederates, and impostors like Hall, rewrote the cause of the war so that slavery played little or no part. Indeed, Hall told one reporter in 1937, "I don't know why we of the South and those of the North got mixed up in that war."¹⁷ In 1860, when South Carolina, the state he claimed to have fought for, attempted to withdraw from the United States, the members of its Secession Convention listed their reasons for secession, which included "increas-

ing hostility on the part of the non-slaveholding States to the institution of slavery," a refusal to allow slavery in new territories, and fears that Abraham Lincoln's recent election would result in a war "waged against slavery." Every one of the convention's listed grievances was somehow tied to slavery. But by the early 20th century, proponents of the Lost Cause had reframed the war to have been about preserving "states' rights" while conveniently ignoring which states' rights (i.e., to slavery) had been threatened.

Andrew Hall was hardly alone in claiming a false Confederate past. In fact, many of the country's "last surviving Confederate veterans" never served. Author William Marvel established in 1991 that the last 12 men to claim to be Confederate veterans were fakes. This meant that the "last Confederate reunion" had no veterans there—though perhaps no one realized it at the time.¹⁸

Hall's lying about military service was not unique. Because he lived in the North, Hall was unable to get a pension for his fabricated service—but the same was not true for men living in the former Confederacy. Aaron Cockerham, one of North Carolina's last three military pensioners, was 5½ when the Civil War ended. While the Confederacy did resort to using underage soldiers at times, children that young were too small to serve even as drummer boys and were not among the teens—however young—who fought at New Market. Pension fraud was rampant in North Carolina and some of the Old North State's pensioners definitely never served in the Confederate army.

How did these fakes not raise suspicion? Some of these "last veterans" even claimed to be more than 130 years old, so it should have been clear they were stretching the truth.¹⁹ Was the desire among Americans to be tied to the great events of the 1860s that strong? Confederates had come to be widely regarded as some of the greatest soldiers since the Spartans at Thermopylae. An expectation of heroism and valor meant that many Americans felt Confederate veterans could be trusted.

Even where individuals were suspected of lying, accepting their stories often served a purpose. For one, white southerners rewrote aspects of the past as a means to buttress white supremacy. When North Carolina liberalized its pension laws in the early 20th century, a fabricated narrative that white southerners had unanimously supported the Confederacy served a political purpose under Jim Crow. Additionally, the myth that all white southerners fought valiantly during the war was used to support arguments that whites had earned the ballot through military service while African Ameri-





cans should not be allowed to vote. The impressive military service by African Americans in the United States Army was conveniently forgotten. Tales of desertion and white anti-Confederate dissenters undermined a remembered past of solidarity and military valor. Pensions also served as spoils to be awarded. Not only was liberalizing pension laws a popular political stance among veterans who voted, but those politicians in charge of pensions frequently used their power to garner votes. They often saw little reason to investigate a soldier's record unless he was accused of desertion and voting for the other party. Promises of voting the "right way"

in the future could lead a rejected pension application to be reconsidered.



The willingness to overlook suspect claims of Civil War service was common—and many claims still appear to need reexamination. The North Carolinian still often recognized as the state's "last Confederate veteran" may have been a fraud. When asked his age, Samuel Bennett was incredibly consistent before 1930. According to every census from 1860 to 1930, as well as to his marriage license, Bennett was born in May 1852.

One casualty of the 20th-century notion of national reconciliation between North and South was the service of African-American troops, which was increasingly overlooked. Above: Black Union veterans march during a reunion in New York in 1912.



When he began applying for a Confederate pension, his age started to fluctuate. In various applications he changed his birth year to 1850 and 1846, eventually settling on the former. Yet Bennett doesn't appear in the 1850 census taken that August, three months after his supposed birth. His parents appear a few pages apart in the 1850 census living with their respective families before they married in 1851. So Bennett either lied until he was 80, and had been hidden from the census taker in 1850 to conceal his illegitimacy, or he started misleading people sometime in his late 70s to make his pension claim more believable.²⁰

Given the numbers who faked Confederate

service, Bennett probably took to lying in old age, when pensions start. It seems most plausible that he was conceived sometime around his parents' wedding date and born nine months later. He probably changed his age so he could claim he enlisted in 1864 at age 13 instead of reporting he was only 12 when the war ended. The unit in which he claimed to serve also changed in various postwar documents and no wartime records exist to back up his assertions. Additionally, many of the events he described from the war (like digging trenches near Richmond) would have been impossible had he been with the units he claimed, as they were not with Lee's army in Virginia.²¹ Despite this, Bennett's gravestone bears the grammatically and historically problematic inscription "N.C. Last Confederate Veteran."

So who was the last Confederate to survive in North Carolina? Ruffin Collie, the second-to-last "Confederate Veteran" according to reports in the 1940s, had no wartime record of his service and also had an evolving birthdate, although the evidence is less definitive than in Bennett's case. Collie may have entered the military so late in the war that no record survived. Whatever the case, his service cannot be confirmed.

As Arron Cockerham (the third-to-last) was clearly a fraud, the last North Carolina Confederate whose service is verifiable by wartime records is George W. Benson.²² Benson's stories of entering the Confederate army in May 1864 and being captured at Fort Fisher can be confirmed by Union records documenting his capture and release.²³ Unlike Hall, Benson did live to see the end of World War II, dying at 102 in June 1948. Though recognized upon his death as the last Confederate veteran living in Mecklenburg County and fourth-to-last in North Carolina, he may have been last in the state.²⁴

Andrew Hall—the impostor in New York—was not eligible for a pension, but this didn't mean he didn't benefit by lying. Being recognized as a Confederate veteran brought social and economic rewards. He was wine and dined and treated as a local celebrity. In 1933, when he attended the state's encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic (the Union veterans' fraternal organization), his trip was paid for by the local Republican County Committee Chairman. Hall's descendants remembered that neighbors always made sure he was fed and "never went without," and that organizations like "the American Legion and the D.A.R. were always good to him."²⁵



There were a few people who questioned the claims of would-be pensioners and other fake Confederates. Not surprisingly these individuals often challenged other aspects of the Lost Cause

narrative as well. One of them, John Singleton Mosby, the Confederate cavalry commander nicknamed “The Gray Ghost,” rejected claims that the Civil War had nothing to do with slavery. He also challenged the expectation that every elderly white southerner had supported the Confederacy. Indeed, Mosby rarely attended reunions because they brought out so many fake veterans, and he once remarked, “I don’t reckon that of the 300 men in my command as many as 100 are still living. I only know positively of about fifteen and they are scattered all over the country. But if I had as many men as now say they were with me, I could have driven Grant out of Virginia.” Mosby guessed that some of the frauds were not even alive during the war. His claims were met with skepticism and shock. Recounting Mosby’s dismissal of reunions a few years later, *The Indianapolis Star* called it “rather unkind skepticism,” suggesting that some actual Confederate veterans from other units merely claimed to be of Mosby’s unit “because of the dash and daring of his army career.” The story went on that “it is not likely, however, that this was often attempted by men who had not been in Confederate service in some capacity. Mosby might have accepted their pretenses as a tribute to himself and been amused instead of angered thereby.” The *Star* had company in the *New Orleans Item*, which had also countered Mosby’s claims that there were many fake Confederates before turning to the issue of Union veterans committing pension fraud against the federal government.²⁶

While politicians (especially southern conservatives) worried constantly about federal pension fraud in the early 20th century, concerns about Confederate pension fraud were often dismissed as unwarranted by those same officials. It was much harder to defraud the federal government than it was southern state governments. The medical exams and inspection of military records required by the federal government were far more thorough than those required by states like North Carolina. For example, federal pension officials always checked the muster rolls of a claimant’s unit before issuing a pension. Southern states did not. Confederate pensions were given with little or no investigation to men who had deserted, never served, taken up arms against the Confederacy, and even to some who had joined the United States Army.²⁷

There were many reasons Confederate pensions were rarely investigated. Not only did the Lost Cause rely upon celebrating these men as noble, heroic, and gentlemanly Confederates, but also pensions provided needed economic assistance to individuals who would otherwise have to be supported by individual counties. Indeed, the Confederate pension system conveniently served as both a statewide welfare system for el-

derly white men and a form of political patronage.

These frauds had an impact on how millions of Americans remembered the past. The myth that Confederate soldiers rarely deserted was embraced and thus encouraged a lack of investigation. Pension fraud and lies like Hall’s and Bennett’s were elements in the larger rewriting of the past going on across the country. By 1930 every elderly white southerner could claim to be a Confederate hero, and white northerners increasingly accepted Confederates as noble soldiers, whose deeds were worthy of recognition. This acceptance of a memory that increasingly ignored the cause and consequences of the war took hold and facilitated “sectional reunion” between whites.

The Lost Cause narrative sought to forget as much as it remembered about the causes of the war and the Confederate soldiers who fought in it. Frederick Douglass famously offered a different memory, trying to remind white Americans that “There was a right side and a wrong side in the late war, which no sentiment ought to cause us to forget.”²⁸ Yet the Lost Cause mythology was premised on the Confederacy being viewed in a positive light—in celebrations of Confederate veterans and purposeful erasures of the atrocities of the war and the role of slavery as its root cause. Confederate pensions were part of the process, and just as Hall remade his past and blurred the causes of the war when he was interviewed, so did those who celebrated him as a symbol of reunion by placing Confederate and United States flags on his grave. Remembering the Civil War as one without a “right” and a “wrong side,” in which brave white men fought other brave white men, served to exonerate Confederates of what otherwise might be recalled as treason and obscure what the war was about. Celebrations of veterans convening and reconciling are pleasant to read about, if one ignores the cost of such forgetfulness. As David Blight has pointed out, “reunion was achieved at the cost of racial equality.”²⁹ It also required the literal cost of paying pensions to those who had not earned them—and allowing men who had never fought to claim they were heroes.

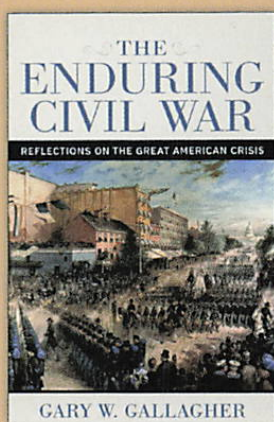
After the war’s last veterans—including the fake ones—died, Hall and others continued being recalled as heroes as a means of uniting white Americans by celebrating the heroics of “both sides.” Facing criticism, in 1959 the *New Yorker* in charge of placing the American and Confederate flags over six graves in western New York each Memorial Day wrote, “if ever we should be a united people it is now”—this in the face of the growing Civil Rights Movement fueled by issues rooted in the Civil War.³⁰ The tradition of marking Confederate graves with both flags continued through the 1960s and appears to have happened sporadically into the 1990s. In

Some prominent former Confederate soldiers—like John Singleton Mosby (shown in a wartime image at right)—questioned the early 20th-century belief that every elderly white southerner had supported the Confederacy. Mosby rarely attended reunions because of the impostors they often attracted. “[I]f I had as many men as now say they were with me, I could have driven Grant out of Virginia,” he remarked about the attendees at one such event.



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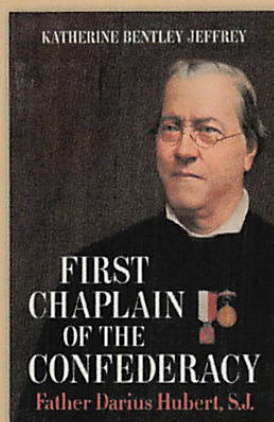
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GARY W. GALLAGHER

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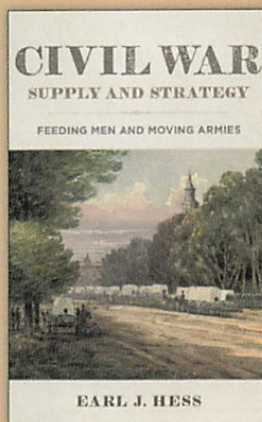
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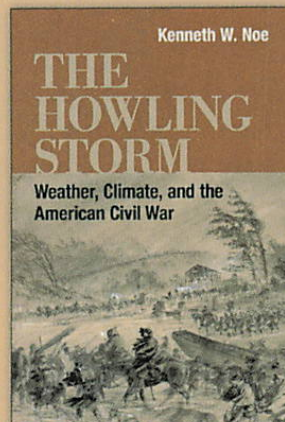
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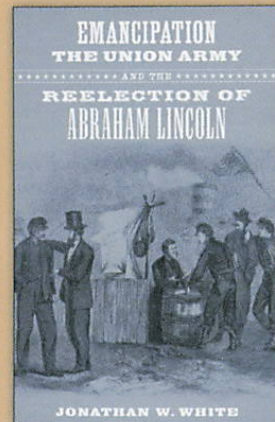
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KENNETH W. NOE

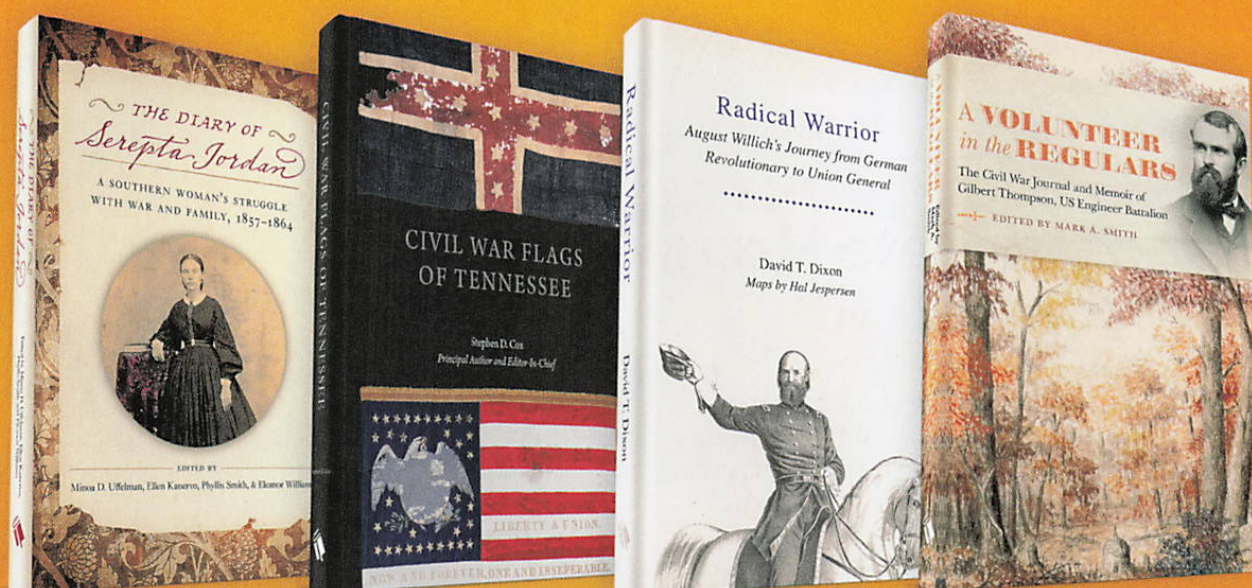
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The Five Best Books on the Confederate Homefront Anne Sarah Rubin

FOR DECADES, BOOKS ABOUT the Confederate homefront were often books about elite white slave-owning women—first Lost Cause-era flowery homages to their patriotism and dedication to the Confederacy, then more critical analyses drawing on the reams of letters and diaries they left behind. The homefront was often constructed as a bounded space, generally far away from the battlefield, virtually untouched by the messiness of combat. The war might intrude, in the form of letters or

In a New Orleans cemetery in 1863, a woman and her daughters adorn the graves of loved ones killed during the war.

visits from furloughed kin, or sometimes “Yankee” interlopers disrupting the world of women. Of course, the Confederate homefront was never so simple, and the late-20th-century social history revolution brought new insights to the field. In general, works about the homefront written since the 1970s have fallen into two categories: community studies (which could encompass either a single city or county, a group of counties, or even an entire state) and more thematic or overarching approaches.

As historians became increasingly interested in questions of nationalism, class conflict, and loyalty within the Confederacy, the homefront took on new prominence, as those historians explored the impact of ordinary citizens on the outcome of the war. Historians recognized that even when the Confederacy was winning victories on the battlefield, it was losing ground at home, as the institution of slavery crumbled and food supplies dwindled. African Americans played a crucial role in this struggle as they resisted and ran to Union lines. Given the geographic size of the Confederacy, it’s impossible to think of the homefront as a single space; rather there were multiple fronts, one for every household. This list is by its very nature idiosyncratic, but I think taken together these five books give a sense of the breadth and richness of this topic.

THE DIARY OF DOLLY LUNT BURGE, 1848–1879

(University of Georgia Press, 1997)
Edited by Christine Jacobsen Carter



Dolly Lunt Burge was an affluent young widow in Georgia when she began her diary in 1848, far from her family and native Maine. By the time she wrote her last entry in 1879, she had been married and widowed twice more, raised a family, ran a large plantation, and managed its transition to free labor. She is less well known than other Confederate diarists like Mary

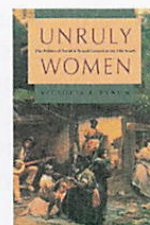


Chesnut or Sarah Morgan, but no less eloquent. The long span of her entries gives the reader the texture and rhythm of daily life, showing the degree to which her home was relatively untouched by the war until 1864. Burge’s diary comes alive when she describes William T. Sherman’s March to the Sea enveloping her property, and then in the years after as she coped—often angrily—with the upending of her world that came with emancipation. Although her entries taper off considerably during Reconstruction, their inclusion in this published version remind us that the war at

home did not end when the battles did.

UNRULY WOMEN: THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL AND SEXUAL CONTROL IN THE OLD SOUTH

(University of North Carolina Press, 1992)
By Victoria E. Bynum



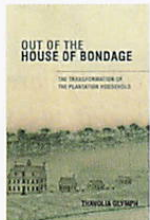
Victoria Bynum’s study of “unruly” women in the North Carolina Piedmont revolutionized the study of the Civil War homefront. What made her subjects unruly was their unwillingness to be contained by

Left: "Southern women feeling the effects of rebellion" is how the editors of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* captioned this May 1863 sketch of one of the bread riots that erupted on the Confederate homefront.

the power of the state in the antebellum and war years: complaining publicly about abuse by men, engaging in forbidden sexual behaviors, and finally defying or challenging the Confederacy. Bynum's subjects are not elites like Dolly Burge; rather they are non-slaveholding whites, free blacks, and enslaved women. Their common struggles to survive during wartime led them to turn to petty theft, prostitution, illegal trade, and at times open protest (as during bread riots). Bynum mines court records and a variety of other public documents to excavate the lives of women (and their families) who were left out of Lost Cause tales of dedicated women and faithful slaves. The class conflict and dissent that she uncovers complicates the picture of a largely unified Confederacy with only isolated pockets of unionism. Rather, it was a place full of internal conflict, and those conflicts often grew out of family concerns rather than the lofty rhetoric of liberty and secession. But as Bynum shows, the personal could quickly become the political.

OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE PLANTATION HOUSEHOLD

(Cambridge University Press, 2008)
By Thavolia Glymph



Thavolia Glymph's brilliant and searing book turns the home—or household—into a literal battlefield. Her work reminds readers that the mythical plantation household was never peaceful and free of violence, and was always a site of work and struggle. She systematically dismantles the

myth that there was any kind of sisterhood or affinity between mistresses and the women who labored for them. Rather, enslaved women resisted when they could, pushing back against their female owners, who in turn responded physically. Enslaved women seized on wartime upheaval to further disrupt the institution of slavery and emancipate themselves. Glymph's work takes Dolly Lunt Burge's postwar complaints about the challenges of free labor and turns them around, showing how freedwomen sought to control their own labor in ways that had previously been impossible. Freedwomen, traditionally seen as relatively powerless, are shown articulating their rights as both workers and citizens. This beautifully written book forces us to reconsider the myths that often shrouded elite white women in a mantle of gentility and manners, reminding us of the brutality at the heart of the Civil War-era South.

ROUTES OF WAR: THE WORLD OF MOVEMENT IN THE CONFEDERATE SOUTH

(Harvard University Press, 2012)
By Yael A. Sternhell

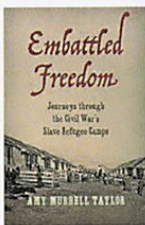


When we think of the homefront, we think of a static place: a farm, a neighborhood, a city. In the powerfully original *Routes of War*, Yael Sternhell puts the Confederacy in motion. Its roads were constantly flooded with people—soldiers moving around the landscape from camp to battlefield, but also stragglers and deserters, and thousands upon thousands of refugees, both white and black. This vast swirl of humanity was rarely organized, and created a powerful sense of disorder among civilians, many of whom came to believe that the Confederate state could not protect them from internal as well as external enemies. White southerners who thought they were safely behind the lines saw their fields raided and trampled by their own soldiers as they marched to

the front; later in the war, deserters on the move literally embodied the Confederacy's collapse. By far the most disturbing change to white southerners came with the presence of African-American refugees, who ran to Union lines or otherwise sought their freedom. The roads, rather than binding the Confederacy together, seemed to be the fraying threads of its disintegration.

EMBATTLED FREEDOM: JOURNEYS THROUGH THE CIVIL WAR'S SLAVE REFUGEE CAMPS

(University of North Carolina Press, 2018)
By Amy Murrell Taylor



The 500,000 African Americans who fled to the Union lines and became known as "contrabands" (or in Taylor's preferred phrase, "slave refugees") forged new lives in the worst of circumstances. Their lives in Union refugee camps, as Taylor shows in her powerful and eloquent book, were a kind of semi-freedom, no longer bound to masters, but instead under the tight controls of the federal government. With meticulous research and deep sensitivity, Taylor reconstructs the lives of black men and women who struggled to survive against disease, mistreatment at the hands of Union soldiers, and repeated forced relocations. Some of the best chapters of this multiple prize-winning work look at the material conditions of refugee lives: the rations they received, the clothing and housing they did (and did not) get, the labor they were forced to provide. The refugee camps were a different kind of homefront, where the enemy was not opposing troops, but the elements and indifference.

ANNE SARAH RUBIN IS A PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY. SHE IS THE AUTHOR OF *A SHATTERED NATION: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE CONFEDERACY* (2005) AND *THROUGH THE HEART OF DIXIE: SHERMAN'S MARCH AND AMERICAN MEMORY* (2014) AND THE CO-EDITOR OF *THE PERFECT SCOUT: A SOLDIER'S MEMOIR OF THE GREAT MARCH TO THE SEA AND THE CAMPAIGN OF THE CAROLINAS* (2018).

The Five Best Books on the African-American Civil War Experience

Holly A. Pinheiro Jr.



This image of an unidentified African-American soldier, his wife, and their two daughters was made between 1863 and 1865.

IN THE MIDST OF current events, people are asking important questions about the history of systemic racism in American society. People are turning to scholars for suggestions of relevant books that inform, challenge, and possibly restructure readers' notions about racial injustice. More than ever, the Civil War and Reconstruction are garnering the attention of diverse audiences seeking to learn why these and other historical eras still matter. Requests often ask for the "definitive" book list on a particular subject, putting unintended pressure on the recommender to provide a succinct catalog. Truthfully, no such list can be perfect. With this caveat, I offer some suggestions.

Life for 19th-century African Americans was highly complex. African-American scholarship, past and present, reflects the diversity of lives that helped shape—both indirectly and directly—nearly every aspect of American society. In the decades immediately after war's end, African-American historians (such as William Wells Brown and Joseph T. Wilson) focused their attention on examinations of African-American Civil War military service. These academics were fighting for inclusion just when many Americans were ignoring their historiographical contributions—which, in some cases, continues today. Newer, innovative research by scholars such as Caroline Wood Newhall

and Le'Trice Donaldson collectively restores marginalized people to historical conversations, thus keeping alive the battle historians started over 100 years ago. Newhall and Donaldson's work also demands that people refocus the discussion on the complicated meaning(s) of African-American military service. The field is deep and evolving, with every new concept demonstrating what more there is to learn.

A prime example has come from pushing the boundaries of Civil War scholarship to recognize African-American families' public and personal lives, especially those connected to United States Colored Troops (USCT) regiments. Historians have previously focused on the USCT soldiering experience to investigate the men's lives, both in and outside of military service. In doing so, many books either relegate the soldiers' kin to the periphery or exclude them altogether. African-American families, in the face of discrimination and terror, battled for survival. Regardless of their economic standing or place of residence, freed and freeborn African Americans came to see that their households' stability, and frequently their lives, were under constant threat from whites. And yet these families persevered and remained resolute in their pursuit of equality. The following texts help to inform the present moment by showing how African Americans have long navigated the informal and formal structures of racism in their battle for civil rights and social justice.

BOUND IN WEDLOCK: SLAVE AND FREE BLACK MARRIAGES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

(Belknap Press, 2017)
By Tera W. Hunter

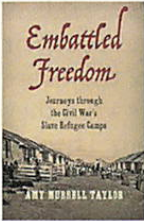


In *Bound in Wedlock: Slave and Free Black Marriages in the Nineteenth Century*, Tera W. Hunter examines the personal, intimate, but rarely private lives of African Americans. Hunter details how the politics of marriage inter-

sected with gender and racial ideologies, slavery, and oversight from both the state and the federal government. Hunter persuasively argues that even though the structures of slavery delegitimized their marriages, the couples and their communities interpreted their bonds differently and authentically. The chaos of the Civil War and its aftermath allowed freed people to legalize their unions by getting a marriage contract, which various federal government representatives stressed as an act to “Christianize” and “civilize” formerly enslaved people. By focusing on marriage certificates, Hunter argues that these were legal documents between a couple and the state. And in many cases, African Americans felt pressure to legalize their unions to attain benefits, such as, for instance, a Civil War pension for the widow of a USCT veteran. Not doing so could jeopardize someone’s household finances for generations.

EMBATTLED FREEDOM: JOURNEYS THROUGH THE CIVIL WAR’S SLAVE REFUGEE CAMPS

(University of North Carolina Press, 2018)
By Amy Murrell Taylor

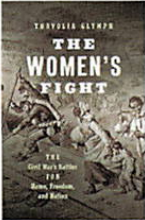


As the Union army traversed Confederate and Border states, freed people and free persons of color attached themselves to the military. People used their bodies to demand their freedom, and helped the Union recognize that the war was about freeing African Americans. Their transition state—life in refugee camps—was fraught. People suffered from poor nutrition, little medical care, scant protection from any nearby Confederate forces, and dilapidated housing. Amy Murrell Taylor’s *Embattled Freedom: Journeys through the Civil War’s Slave Refugee Camps* eloquently details the experiences of African Americans who engaged the difficult process of forcing a wartime society to understand their reconstructed place in America. Taylor describes how refugee camps became battlegrounds between African Americans

and Union army officials over resources and military logistics. In short, African-American refugees made the Union army modify its tactics to recognize their freedom and changed existence.

THE WOMEN’S FIGHT: THE CIVIL WAR’S BATTLE FOR HOME, FREEDOM, AND NATION

(University of North Carolina Press, 2020)
By Thavolia Glymph



As Thavolia Glymph states in *The Women’s Fight: The Civil War’s Battle for Home, Freedom, and Nation*, the war was never a male-only conflict, as many studies argue. Women of all races, classes, and every allegiance experienced its realities, in differing but substantive ways. The front lines, Glymph writes, reverberated to the homefront. The Civil War compelled women to modify gender and racial ideologies in order to support and defend either the Union or the Confederacy. Her work shows that African-American women found numerous opportunities to involve themselves in the conflict. For instance, when Robert E. Lee discussed his military tactics with a friend in Gloucester County, Virginia, an enslaved woman relayed the information to the Union army. These, and other, actions compelled Glymph to reclaim African-American women from the margins of scholarly studies.

A GREAT SACRIFICE: NORTHERN BLACK SOLDIERS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THE EXPERIENCE OF CIVIL WAR

(Fordham University Press, 2019)
By James G. Mendez

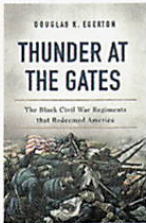


Civil War scholarship frequently overlooks the lives of northern-born USCT soldiers, and there is even less attention paid to their kin. In *A Great Sacrifice: Northern Black Soldiers, Their Families, and the Experience of Civil War* by James G. Mendez, those soldiers’

families are the central focus. He writes that freeborn African-American families can no longer be just background figures. Instead, they were crucial in writing letters that updated soldiers on how their families scraped money together to survive in their absence. When USCT soldiers were disabled, physically or mentally, or died, it created immediate financial and emotional problems for families already struggling to survive racial discrimination. Even in freedom, African-American life was precarious. And the Civil War made many of their living situations worse.

THUNDER AT THE GATES: THE BLACK CIVIL WAR REGIMENTS THAT REDEEMED AMERICA

(Basic Books, 2016)
By Douglas Egerton



Douglas Egerton’s masterful *Thunder at the Gates: The Black Civil War Regiments That Redeemed America* shows there was more to Massachusetts’ African-American regiments than depicted in the movie *Glory*. The effects of the war and its aftermath are connected to the families Egerton examines. The historical subjects he investigates not only had influential military careers, but also some went on to impressive postwar jobs. While their lives may not represent the majority of northern African Americans, they illustrate the diverse paths these soldiers took in a society where racial oppression continued long after the Civil War ended. Ultimately, Egerton provides an engaging study and ideal introduction for people looking to learn more about northern African Americans during the conflict, and that may lead them to further reading on other studies. 

HOLLY A. PINHEIRO JR. RECEIVED HIS DOCTORAL DEGREE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA AND IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY. HIS MONOGRAPH *THE FAMILIES’ CIVIL WAR* IS UNDER CONTRACT WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA PRESS.

AMERICAN ILIAD

CONTINUED FROM P. 20



President Abraham Lincoln

domestic life”—Herndon detested Lincoln’s wife, Mary Todd Lincoln—“and the knowledge of his own obscure and lowly origin.”⁹ Herndon might have added the deaths of two of Lincoln’s sons in childhood: Edward in 1850 at age 3 and Willie in 1862 at age 11.

Another alleged source of Lincoln’s depressions was the doomed relationship with Rutledge, whose death from typhoid fever at age 22 is supposed to have triggered the suicidal ideations that caused his friends such alarm. Lincoln’s biographers differ as to the extent of his love affair with Rutledge—and whether it was indeed a love affair—but it is a staple of the Lincoln legend and the inspiration for Edgar Lee Masters’ well-known poem, in which Rutledge speaks from the grave to say in effect that she is the source of Lincoln’s greatness, that the “deathless music” of “With malice toward none, with charity for all” originates with her, as well as “the forgiveness of millions toward millions”; that she was “wedded” to Lincoln, “not through union, but through separation.” She concludes triumphantly, “Bloom forever, O Republic, / From the dust of my bosom!”¹⁰

The poet Stephen Vincent Benét also invokes Lincoln’s depression in *John Brown’s Body*, his epic book-length poem about the Civil War. In a long passage midway through the work, Benét con-

cludes a soliloquy in which Lincoln waits for word of the outcome of the Battle of Antietam and says at one point, “I’ll get the hypo, sure, / Unless I watch myself, waiting for news. / I can’t afford to get the hypo now, / I’ve got too much to do.”¹¹

Lincoln is the closest thing we have to an American saint, and the emphasis on his depression suggests a connection with Jesus Christ, whom Scripture describes as “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”¹² And ultimately it is Lincoln’s melancholy that distinguishes him from America’s other wartime presidents—from Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s jaunty optimism, for example. For the Civil War is unlike any of the nation’s other conflicts. It was a tragedy, and Lincoln’s melancholy has such a grip on the American imagination because it seems to recognize so deeply and fittingly the extent of that tragedy. **M**

MARK GRIMSLEY, A HISTORY PROFESSOR AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, IS THE AUTHOR OF SEVERAL BOOKS, INCLUDING *AND KEEP MOVING ON: THE VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN, MAY-JUNE 1864* (2002) AND *THE HARD HAND OF WAR: UNION MILITARY POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN CIVILIANS, 1861-1865* (1995). HE HAS ALSO WRITTEN MORE THAN 50 ARTICLES AND ESSAYS.

FIGHTING WORDS

CONTINUED FROM P. 22

Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry were all events that few had direct control of but which indirectly affected many. Average Americans felt powerless in the face of such overwhelming disruptions, and the war only magnified that sensation. Our Civil War helped popularize the British expression as it accurately represented the attitude felt by many soldiers and civilians.

Like the British seamen before them, 19th-century Americans dragooned by the Civil War’s uncertainties and miseries *grinned and bore it*, bolstering themselves and our language in the process. **M**

TRACY L. BARNETT IS A DOCTORAL CANDIDATE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA. HER PRIMARY RESEARCH INTEREST IS THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE 19TH-CENTURY SOUTH AND SHE IS FASCINATED BY MALE BEHAVIOR—ESPECIALLY THE BAD AND UNSAVORY VARIETIES. AS THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES RESEARCH FELLOW, SHE WORKED AS A RESEARCH ASSISTANT FOR *PRIVATE VOICES* (ALTCHIVE.ORG/PRIVATE-VOICES/), A WEBSITE DEVOTED TO CIVIL WAR LANGUAGE.

WOUNDED WARRIORS

CONTINUED FROM P. 32

from tales of brave, wounded veterans, these visions depict an absurd corps full of damaged, immoral, and “cute” rejects.

The Invalid Corps remained in service through the end of the war, and portions of it continued in the United States Army into 1869. In total, an estimated 60,000 soldiers served in the ranks of the corps.¹¹ While it certainly played a role in the success of the Union army, its legacy may have been more ideological. In the creation and implementation of the Invalid Corps, the federal government was forced to confront the paradox disabled soldiers represented: that even the most patriotic war wounds had the potential to turn soldiers into dependent paupers, and that the government had to find a way to stave off such a crisis. (This was to become the defining conflict of later political fights over the swelling pension rolls, which centered on whether pensions—designed to keep veterans from becoming paupers—were actually encouraging dependency by giving disabled men cash payouts.)

For Invalid Corps soldiers, the frustrating position they found themselves in foreshadowed the line that disabled veterans would have to walk, adhering to notions of manhood while being a wounded warrior. In the postwar era, soldiers learned to craft narratives about their lives in an attempt to prove they were not just looking for handouts when they sought their promised pensions. Their dilemmas predicted how even now Americans react to war-related ailments with lavish patriotic rhetoric, while simultaneously feeling unsettled at their “burdens” on the nation’s social services. The Invalid Corps reminds us that our beliefs about war wounds and our assumptions about disability are not unrelated, but deeply and painfully entwined. **M**

SARAH HANDLEY-COUSINS IS A CLINICAL ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITY STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO. SHE IS THE AUTHOR OF *BODIES IN BLUE: DISABILITY IN THE CIVIL WAR NORTH*. SHE ALSO SERVES AS AN EDITOR OF THE HISTORY BLOG *NURSING CLIO* AND IS A CO-PRODUCER OF *DIG: A HISTORY PODCAST*.

THE HERO OF FRANKLIN
CONTINUED FROM P. 49

ward, then reloaded and passed them again, pouring fire into the mass of bewildered Rebels now trapped within the Federal works between the retrenchment and the main line. A six-gun battery, abandoned by its crew in the initial confusion, was put back in action by men of the 125th Ohio, who fired canister into the throng of Confederates in the yard. Thick smoke descended like a heavy fog, and the noise was deafening. As one of Opdycke's sergeants recalled, "I never see[n] enemy men fall so fast. Our boys shot them just like hogs."⁵⁵ The bloody episode took about 20 minutes, but it must have felt endless. "On came fresh columns of the enemy and the musketry exceeded anything I ever heard," Opdycke told his wife days later. "[T]he powder smoke darkened the sunlight." By the time Confederate survivors had scrambled back over the works, Opdycke's charge had taken 394 prisoners, captured 10 battle flags, and most important, sealed the breach at its most vulnerable point. When Hood's army finally ceased hurling itself at the defenses, Opdycke "stepped over the front of our works to see the ef-

fects. I never saw their dead and wounded lie so thickly piled one upon another; the carnage was awful."⁵⁶

Though Wagner's advanced position had been driven in and Hood's Confederates managed to momentarily penetrate the Federal line near the Carter House, Opdycke's quick thinking, initiative, and fearless combat leadership may have saved the Federal army at Franklin. As twilight fell and the slaughter continued, the overall momentum of Confederate attacks stalled all along the line. The battle then degenerated into disjointed assaults, close-range slugging matches, and hand-to-hand fighting near, and in some cases within, the Federal works. Elements of Lieutenant General Stephen D. Lee's Confederate corps finally arrived from Spring Hill near twilight, with Lee himself appearing ahead of his columns at about 4 p.m., just as the first Confederate assault was getting underway. Lee's lead division, commanded by Major General Edward "Allegheny" Johnson, struggled to deploy in the looming darkness. Though Johnson's four brigades eventually pitched in, marching into battle by the light of torches, the Army of Tennessee's disjointed attacks along the line failed to dislodge the Federals by nightfall. Schofield ordered an overnight withdrawal, and by dawn the Federals had escaped

yet again. Two weeks later, Schofield's and Thomas' combined forces would rout Hood's army at Nashville, a defeat that effectively destroyed the Army of Tennessee as a fighting force.⁵⁷

Wagner's career was ended when he asked to be relieved rather than face the shame of a formal inquiry.⁵⁸ Certainly Opdycke thought he had saved the army at Franklin in spite of Wagner, and for the rest of his life fiercely maintained that the charge at the Carter House had come without any prompting or orders from above. Shellenberger agreed, saying, "[Opdycke's] persistence in thus marching his brigade inside the breastworks about two hours later proved to be the salvation of our army."⁵⁹ "Every one here says 'Col. Opdycke saved the day,'" Opdycke wrote to his wife after the battle. "Stanley, Wood, and Wagner assert it. Genl Cox said the same to me, and to day the immortal Thomas pressed my hand and repeated it.... Wood tells me that Thomas will send on a special demand for my immediate promotion and that Stanley has already written it."⁶⁰ Stanley, years later, attempted to claim credit for Opdycke's charge: "In truth, my riding in front of Opdycke's brigade just at the critical moment and calling on them to charge was a unique act, and was done by no other officer of my rank and command that I know of during the war," he declared.⁶¹ Stanley was certainly nearby when Opdycke charged; he received a serious wound that eventually forced him to relinquish IV Corps command before the Battle of Nashville. Given Opdycke's subsequent quest to claim primary credit, Stanley grew to dislike him intensely. "Opdycke was a very singular man; he had unusual bravery—I never saw a more daring man; but he had an ugly disposition that repelled all friendship and he was full of envy and utterly untruthful," Stanley attested.⁶² Cox, who was in the fight at the Carter House, also claimed some honor for himself. Opdycke, for his part, chafed that Cox, Stanley, and others did not give him as much credit as he believed he was due in the days following the battle. "I presume when [Cox] wrote that official recommendation [sic] of me he thought I had received the order; but he then knew that I saved the army from a crushing defeat for he told me so the very night of the battle before we had been withdrawn from the works." Opdycke, ever discontent,  CONT. ON P. 68



About two weeks after the fighting at Franklin, Union and Confederate forces clashed again at the Battle of Nashville (depicted above), where the combined armies of John M. Schofield and George H. Thomas handed John Bell Hood a decisive defeat—one that effectively destroyed the Army of Tennessee as a fighting force.

THE HERO OF FRANKLIN

CONTINUED FROM P. 67

seethed at this denial of public accolades and the delayed promotion to brigadier general that he so longed for. "But the whole truth will appear some time: it seems to be universally known in this army and is common talk: not only that my charge saved the day but that I made it without orders from any one."⁶³ **M**

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COUNTERFEIT CONFEDERATES

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1992, a woman explained to a reporter why she placed both flags on Hall's grave: Hall "was an American too.... He just fought for the wrong side." As if which side he fought for was almost accidental.³¹ Not everyone agreed with this tradition. In nearby Batavia, New York, in addition to hearing criticism for honoring a Confederate in the 1950s, the grave of a confirmed Confederate veteran had his two flags removed by "vandals" in 1969.³²

While the citizens of Albion honored their fake Confederate each Memorial Day, the grave of a once-prominent Confederate in the same cemetery went largely overlooked. Rufus Bullock, a native New Yorker transplanted to Georgia, ran the Southern Express telegraph and shipping company throughout the Civil War. As the company transported Confederate funds and supplies, Bullock also oversaw the expansion of Confederate telegraph lines. He spent much of the war as the company's agent in Augusta, Georgia, before moving to Richmond as an agent of the Confederate Quartermaster department and leader of the Southern Express Co. Whatever



Rufus Bullock

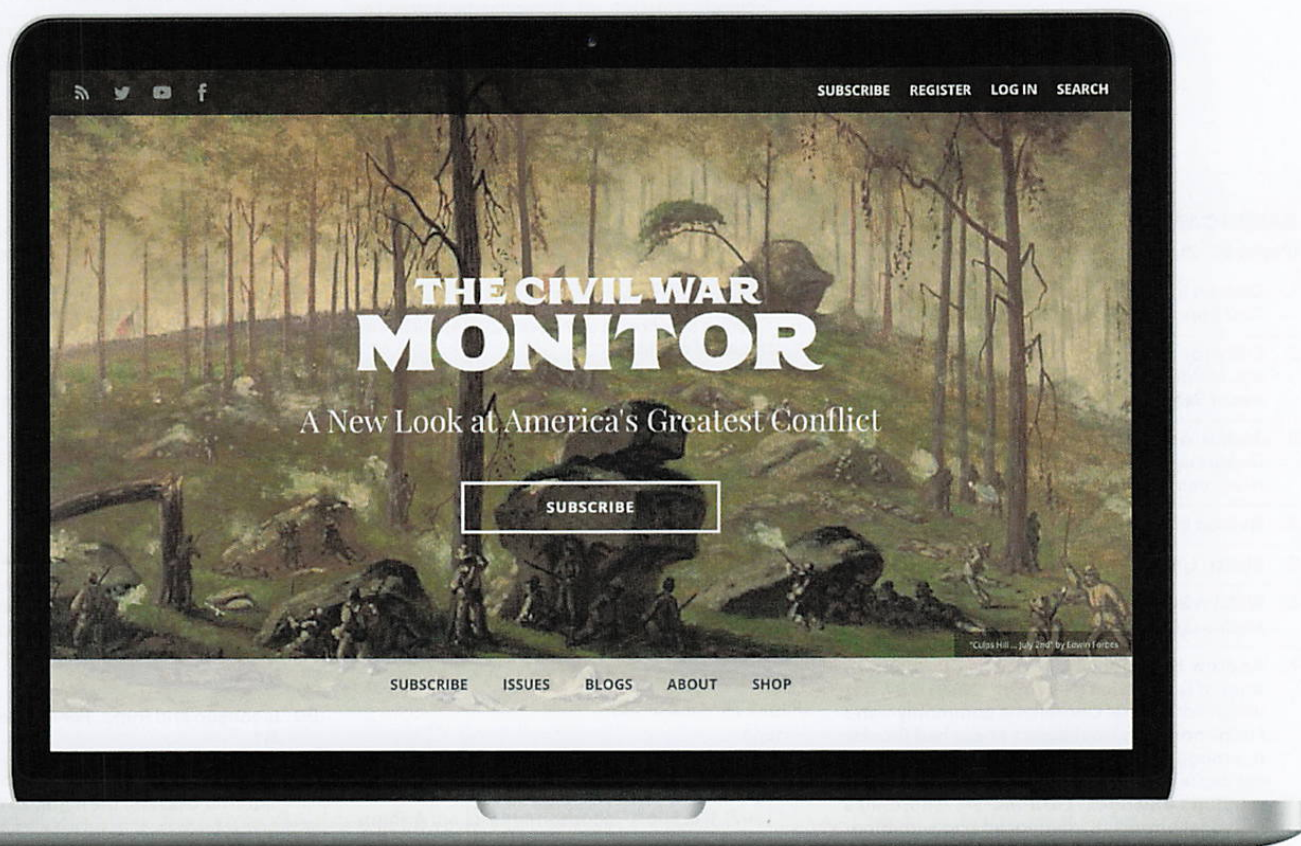
his official status (there is some confusion as to whether he had a formal Confederate rank), he worked for the Confederacy on logistics throughout the conflict. He was captured with Colonel Robert Ould, who oversaw the Confederate negotiations for POW exchanges, as they attempted to escape Richmond at war's end. Afterward, some alleged that Bullock had been part of the Georgia militia that captured the Augusta arsenal in 1861.³³ Why then did a man who had actually thrown in with the Confederacy fail to get a flag like Hall's?

Probably because the rest of Bullock's life story did not fit the strictures of the Lost Cause. During Reconstruction Bullock served as the Republican governor of Georgia and became a staunch advocate for African-American rights. He opposed black disenfranchisement and was eventually forced to flee the state.

His participation in Republican politics failed to fit into the ahistorical memory of the Lost Cause that recalled Reconstruction as a period of misrule by unprincipled carpetbaggers and a few corrupt scalawags. Ex-Confederates were not supposed to have supported Reconstruction in the mythology of the Lost Cause. And so Bullock was remembered by many former Confederates as a villain, neither having served in battle at Gettysburg or Vicksburg, nor, more importantly, having fulfilled the expectations of a Confederate after the war. **M**

ADAM H. DOMBY, WHO EARNED HIS DOCTORATE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL, IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON AND THE AUTHOR OF *THE FALSE CAUSE: FRAUD, FABRICATION, AND WHITE SUPREMACY IN CONFEDERATE MEMORY*, WHICH EXAMINES PENSION FRAUD, CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS, AND LOST CAUSE MYTHS.

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Notes

SOURCES & CITATIONS FROM THIS ISSUE'S ARTICLES

AMERICAN ILIAD

(Pages 20–21, 64)

1. Quoted in William C. Davis, *Duel Between the First Ironclads* (Garden City, NY, 1975), 20.
2. Entry for September 22, 1862, David Donald, ed., *Inside Lincoln's Cabinet: The Civil War Diaries of Salmon P. Chase* (New York, 1954), 149.
3. Joshua Wolf Shenk, *Lincoln's Melancholy: How Depression Challenged a President and Fueled His Greatness* (Boston, 2005), 21.
4. Quoted in Shenk, *Lincoln's Melancholy*, 167.
5. Shenk, *Lincoln's Melancholy*, 8.
6. William Styron, *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness* (New York, 1990), 38.
7. Andrew Solomon, *The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression* (New York, 2001), 367. It is worth noting that Churchill is commonly—and I think correctly—believed to have had Bipolar II, a mood disorder characterized by both clinical depression and creative “highs” called hypomanic episodes. Lord Moran, Churchill's personal physician, diagnosed him with bipolar disorder and recounts Churchill's bouts with the illness in *Churchill: The Struggle for Survival, 1940–1965* (Boston, 1966). Shenk considers but quickly dismisses the idea that Lincoln had Bipolar II. See Shenk, *Lincoln's Melancholy*, 22. Bipolar II differs from Bipolar I in that the “highs” remain functional and do not escalate into full-blown, psychotic manic episodes.
8. William H. Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln* (Cleveland, 1942), 304.
9. *Ibid.*, 473.
10. Edgar Lee Master, “Ann Rutledge,” *Spoon River Anthology* (New York, 1963), 214.
11. Stephen Vincent Benét, *John Brown's Body* (New York, 1928), 190.
12. Book of Isaiah, chapter 53, verse 3 (King James Version).

FIGHTING WORDS

(Pages 22–23, 64)

1. A. Pinkney Ward to Eliza Whitner, August 7, 1862, *Private Voices* (altchive.org/private-voices/node/12230); James A. McMurtrey to Lucinda McMurtrey, March 10, 1863, *Private Voices* (altchive.org/private-voices/node/8171).
2. Alfred Spencer, ed., *The Memoirs of William Hickey*, Volume 1 (New York, 1923), 196.

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(Pages 24–33, 64)

1. “Letter from a Member of the New Hampshire 5th,” *The Farmer's Cabinet*, April 30, 1863.
2. John W. DeForest to Brigadier General James B. Fry, November 30, 1865, in United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records* 129 vols. (Washington, 1880–1901), Series III, Vol. 5, 543 (hereafter cited as OR).
3. Circular No. 14, OR, Series III, Vol. 3, 225.
4. Paul A. Cimbala, “Federal Manpower Needs and the U. S. Army's Veteran Reserve Corps,” in Sanders Marble, ed., *Scraping the Barrel: The Military Use of Substandard Manpower, 1860–1960* (New York, 2012), 8.
5. James B. Fry to E.M. Stanton, November 17, 1863, OR, Series III, Vol. 3, 1046.
6. “Men Wanted for the Invalid Corps,” *The Farmer's Cabinet*, September 3, 1863.
7. “Miscellaneous. The Invalid Corps—What Its Duties Are,” *National American*, November 20, 1863.
8. Fred Pelka, ed., *The Civil War Letters of Colonel Charles F. Johnson* (Amherst, 2004), 238. Emphasis in original.
9. Cimbala, “Federal Manpower Needs and the U. S. Army's Veteran Reserve Corps,” 13.
10. Frank Wilder, “The Invalid Corps, Song & Chorus,” Johns Hopkins University, Levy Sheet Music Collection, Box 088, Item 095 (jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/23854).
11. Margaret E. Wagner, Gary W. Gallagher, and Paul Finkelman, eds., *The Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference* (New York, 2002), 442.

THE HERO OF FRANKLIN

(Pages 34–49, 65–66)

1. Wiley Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah: Spring Hill, Franklin, & Nashville* (Lawrence, 1992), 178; Eric A. Jacobson and Richard A. Rupp, *For Cause & For Country: A Study of the Affair at Spring Hill and the Battle of Franklin* (Franklin, 2008), 46.
2. Quoted in Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, 178.
3. Jacob D. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin* (New York, 1897), 223.
4. Opdycke to his wife, Lucy, October 6, 1863, in Glenn V. Longacre and John E. Haas, eds., *To Battle for God and the Right: The Civil War Letterbooks of Emerson Opdycke* (Urbana and Chicago, 2003), 108.
5. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 222–223; Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, 170–171.
6. United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records* 129 vols. (Washington, 1880–1901), Vol. 45, pt.

1, 113, 230, 268, 275, 277, 331 (hereafter cited as OR; all references are to volume 45, part 1 unless otherwise noted).

7. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 37.
8. Jacobson and Rupp, *For Cause & For Country*, 199–207.
9. Osage orange is also called “horse-apple” or “bodark,” the latter derived from the species' alternative name, “bois d'arc.” Richard L. Wynia, “Plant fact sheet: Osage orange, *Maclura pomifera* (Rafin.)” U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2011 (plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs_mapo.pdf), retrieved May 1, 2020.
10. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 57.
11. OR, 432; Jacobson and Rupp, *For Cause & For Country*, 211–213.
12. OR, 231.
13. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 65.
14. OR, 231.
15. *Ibid.*, 1174.
16. Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, 170.
17. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 72–73.
18. OR, 231.
19. Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, 172.
20. OR, 240.
21. *Ibid.*, 149.
22. Opdycke to Lucy Opdycke, Dec. 2, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 249.
23. OR, 231.
24. *Ibid.*, 149.
25. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 74.
26. OR, 231.
27. OR, 1174; Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, 173.
28. OR, 270.
29. OR, 231, 270; Shellenberger, *Confederate Veteran* Vol. 36, 380; Jacobson and Rupp, *For Cause & For Country*, 228. Shellenberger maintains that Conrad's position was 470 yards in front of the main Federal line. Shellenberger, *The Battle of Franklin*, 12.
30. Jacobson and Rupp, *For Cause & For Country*, 417.
31. Opdycke to his wife, December 13, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 257.
32. OR, 270.
33. Shellenberger, *Confederate Veteran* Vol. 36, 380–381.
34. Opdycke himself readily acknowledged his tendency to lose control of his emotions, a few weeks earlier confessing to Colonel Luther P. Bradley, “[a] gentleman of so fortunate temperament such as yourself may not sympathize with one whose temper is not less fortunately governed.” Opdycke to Bradley, November 8, 1864, in *To Battle for God and the Right*, xxvii.
35. Edward G. Whitesides to John K. Shellenberger, October 27, 1890, Shellenberger Correspondence, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
36. Shellenberger, *Confederate Veteran* 36, 381.
37. OR, 395; Jacobson and Rupp, *For Cause & For Country*, 211–212.

38. OR, 240.

39. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 91.

40. Ibid., 74.

41. OR, 256.

42. Ibid., 270.

43. Rumors that Wagner "kept bracing himself on whisky" and "was plainly drunk" during the battle were hotly debated by veterans after the war, but there is no conclusive contemporary evidence of Wagner's inebriation. *The National Tribune*, December 27, 1894; Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, 176, 190.

44. Levi T. Scofield, *The Retreat from Pulaski to Nashville, Tenn.* (Cleveland, 1909), 32-33; Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 337.

45. Norman D. Brown, ed., *One of Cleburne's Command: The Civil War Reminiscences and Diary of Capt. Samuel T. Foster* (Austin, 1980), 147.

46. Scofield, *The Retreat from Pulaski to Nashville, Tenn.*, 37. Opdycke later told his wife, "Wagner was relieved [sic] of the division and Brig Gen. [W.L.] Elliot assigned to it. W. feels deeply cut and I almost pity him." Opdycke to his wife, December 6, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 253; Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 229-230.

47. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 42.

48. OR, 240; Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 95-96; Opdycke to his wife, December 13, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 256.

49. 73rd Illinois, *A History of the Seventy-Third Regiment of Illinois Infantry Volunteers* (Springfield, 1890), 433-434, 444.

50. Opdycke to his wife, December 13, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 256.

51. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 99.

52. 73rd Illinois, *A History of the Seventy-Third Regiment of Illinois Infantry*, 449-450.

53. Opdycke to his wife, December 13, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 256.

54. Jacobson and Rupp, *For Cause & For Country*, 322-323; Charles T. Clark, *Opdycke Tigers* (Columbus, 1895), 353.

55. Quoted in Sword, *The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, 205.

56. OR, 241; Opdycke to his wife, December 2, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 250.

57. OR, 687.

58. OR, Vol. 45, pt. 2, 21, 117, 146; Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 224.

59. *Confederate Veteran*, Vol. 36, 381.

60. Opdycke to his wife, December 2, 1864, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 250.

61. Cox, *The Battle of Franklin*, 100.

62. D.S. Stanley, *Personal Memoirs of Maj. Gen. D.S. Stanley, U.S.A.* (Cambridge, MA, 1917), 212-213.

63. Opdycke to his wife, January 16, 1865, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 272. Opdycke partially blamed the situation on Grant and his perceived bias against the Army of the Cumberland. "Were it in any other army those appointments would have been made at once by telegram but Grant evidently holds a grudge against the Army of the Cumberland (probably for saving him at Pittsburgh Landing) and hardly a promotion has been made in it since his elevation to the Supreme Command." Opdycke to his wife, January 11, 1865, *To Battle for God and the Right*, 271.

COUNTERFEIT CONFEDERATES

(Pages 50-59, 66)

1. "Confederate Veteran, 99, Sees Allied Win in 1943," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, January 2, 1943; "Confederate Army Veteran To Observe 101st Birthday," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, January 23, 1944; "Confederate Veteran Dies Two Days Before Being 102," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, January 23, 1944.

2. Arch Merrill, "Flags Arrive Again for Confederate Grave," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, May 26, 1968; Arch Merrill, "Henrietta Man's Great Aunt & The South's Memorial Day," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, May 28, 1961; "Many Memorial Day Activities in Area," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, May 30, 1966.

3. Arch Merrill, "Long Gray Line," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, May 25, 1958.

4. David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, 2001), 301.

5. "One of 3 Survivors Attends Reunion of 'Bloody Eighth,'" (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, August 23, 1939.

6. Frances Pecorella Pierce, email to author, July 4, 2017. Pierce's extensive genealogical research makes clear Andrew Hall lied about his age.

7. New York State Census, Ancestry.com; Federal Census; newspapers on newspapers.com cited below.

8. "Bill Hall," 33rd Virginia Infantry Company G (33rdvirginiacog.webs.com/warriorspast.htm), accessed August 4, 2017.

9. Frances Pecorella Pierce, "Andrew Hall" Findagrave.com, October 2, 2016 (findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=13740896), accessed August 4, 2017; emails with Frances Pecorella Pierce by author. Pierce found additional genealogical information to confirm her suspicions.

10. "Fought with Southern Army, His Brother Gave Leg For the North," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, March 4, 1928; "Civil War Veterans Convene for Annual Reunion," *The Daily Messenger* (Canandaigua, NY), August 24, 1936; "Albion Man Veteran of Jackson's Command," *Poughkeepsie Eagle-News*, April 20, 1935. In 1835 he claimed to have been in "Company 1, First division, of the 6th South Carolina," a unit designation that did not exist as Confederate companies were designated by letters and divisions were not numbered. "Orleans Hails Veterans of '61," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, May 31, 1935.

11. "Fought with Southern Army, His Brother Gave Leg For the North," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, March 4, 1928.

12. "Civil War Days Relived as Veterans Who Helped Save Union Gather as Justice Thompson's Guests," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, August 23, 1933.

13. "Albion Man Veteran of Jackson's Command," *Poughkeepsie Eagle-News*, April 20, 1935.

14. Jay S. Hoar, "The South's Last Boys in Gray," *Confederate Veteran* (January-February 1989), 33.

15. Jay S. Hoar, *The South's Last Boys in Gray: An Epic Prose Elegy, A Substudy of Sunset and Dusk of the Blue and the Gray* (Bowling Green, 1986), 169.

16. Matthew Ballard, "Oldest Civil War vets pictured at Mt. Albion 70 years after war," *Orleanshub.com*, September 5, 2015 (orleanshub.com/oldest-civil-war-veterans-pictured-at-mt-albion-about-70-years-after-war); Hoar, "The South's

Last Boys in Gray," 33, 47. At times he appears to have changed which unit he served with.

17. "Tribute Paid Late Justice," *Canandaigua Daily Messenger*, August 23, 1937.

18. William Marvel, "The Great Impostors," *Blue & Gray*, 8, no. 3 (1991): 32-33.

19. Ibid.

20. Census and genealogical data from ancestry.com; Pension for Bennett, S.M. (Yancey County), North Carolina State Archives. Given the listing of "senility" on his death certificate, he may not have realized he wasn't telling the truth. Others may have pushed through his application so as to find a means of support for an elderly man who was "entirely incapacitated for manual labor owing to old age and diseases[e]."

21. Michael Hardy, "58th NCT update and the last Confederate soldier from North Carolina," Looking for the Confederate War, September 25, 2007 (michaelhardy.blogspot.com/2007/09/58th-nct-update-and-last-confederate.html). He may actually have meant to claim he was in the 29th Regiment, in which his grandfather had served.

22. Lynn Nisbet, "Around Capitol Square" *Statesville Daily Record*, May 12, 1947.

23. Compiled Service Record for George W. Benson, 2nd North Carolina Artillery (36th State Troops), Compiled service records of Confederate soldiers from North Carolina units, National Archives Microfilm M270, accessible on fold3.com.

24. Pension for Benson, G.W. (Cleveland County, Gaston County and Mecklenburg County), North Carolina State Archives; "Civil War Vet Passes at 102," *Gastonia Gazette*, June 15, 1948.

25. "Civil War Days Relived as Veterans Who Helped Save Union Gather as Justice Thompson's Guests," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, August 23, 1933; Hoar, "The South's Last Boys in Gray," *Confederate Veteran*, 47.

26. "They Posed as Mosby Veterans," *Indianapolis Star*, June 5, 1916; "Too Many Veterans," *New Orleans Item*, October 28, 1910;

27. Adam H. Domby, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory* (Charlottesville, 2020), 76-103; Kathleen Gorman, "Confederate Pensions as Social Welfare," in *Before the New Deal: Social Welfare in the South, 1830-1930*, ed. by Elna C. Green (Athens, 1999), 24-39. For how a few formerly enslaved people were able to get smaller pensions by presenting themselves as loyal slaves see Domby, *False Cause*, 104-131.

28. Quoted in Ethan Kytle, *Romantic Reformers and the Antislavery Struggle in the Civil War Era* (Cambridge, 2014), 282.

29. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 470n3 (see also 389).

30. Arch Merrill, "A Bugle Call at Fort Corners in '68," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, May 24, 1959.

31. Michael Zeigler, "Unselfish Colors Honor the Brave," (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, May 21, 1992.

32. Bob Emens, "Stars and Bars Flag Marks Rebel's Grave" (Rochester) *Democrat and Chronicle*, June 2, 1969.

33. Russell Duncan, *Entrepreneur for Equality: Governor Rufus Bullock, Commerce, and Race in Post-Civil War Georgia* (Athens, 1994); "To the Friends of the Soldiers throughout the Confederacy," *Richmond Dispatch*, July 13, 1864; "News From Richmond," *Baltimore Sun*, April 17, 1865; One who Was Present, "Mr. Editor," *Daily New Era*, April 10, 1868.



A Sinister Band

Fashioned from plated brass and inscribed inside with the date “June 15th 1863,” the man’s ring shown here is less ordinary than it looks. It hides a small box intended to be filled with a toxin. A hinged lid on the box is slotted to allow a small, sharp blade to snap out when the wearer pushed a button on the ring’s side. With the poisoned blade exposed, the attacker could clandestinely poke his victim and (one presumes) make a hasty getaway. The owner of the ring—and whether it was used as intended during the Civil War—remains unknown.



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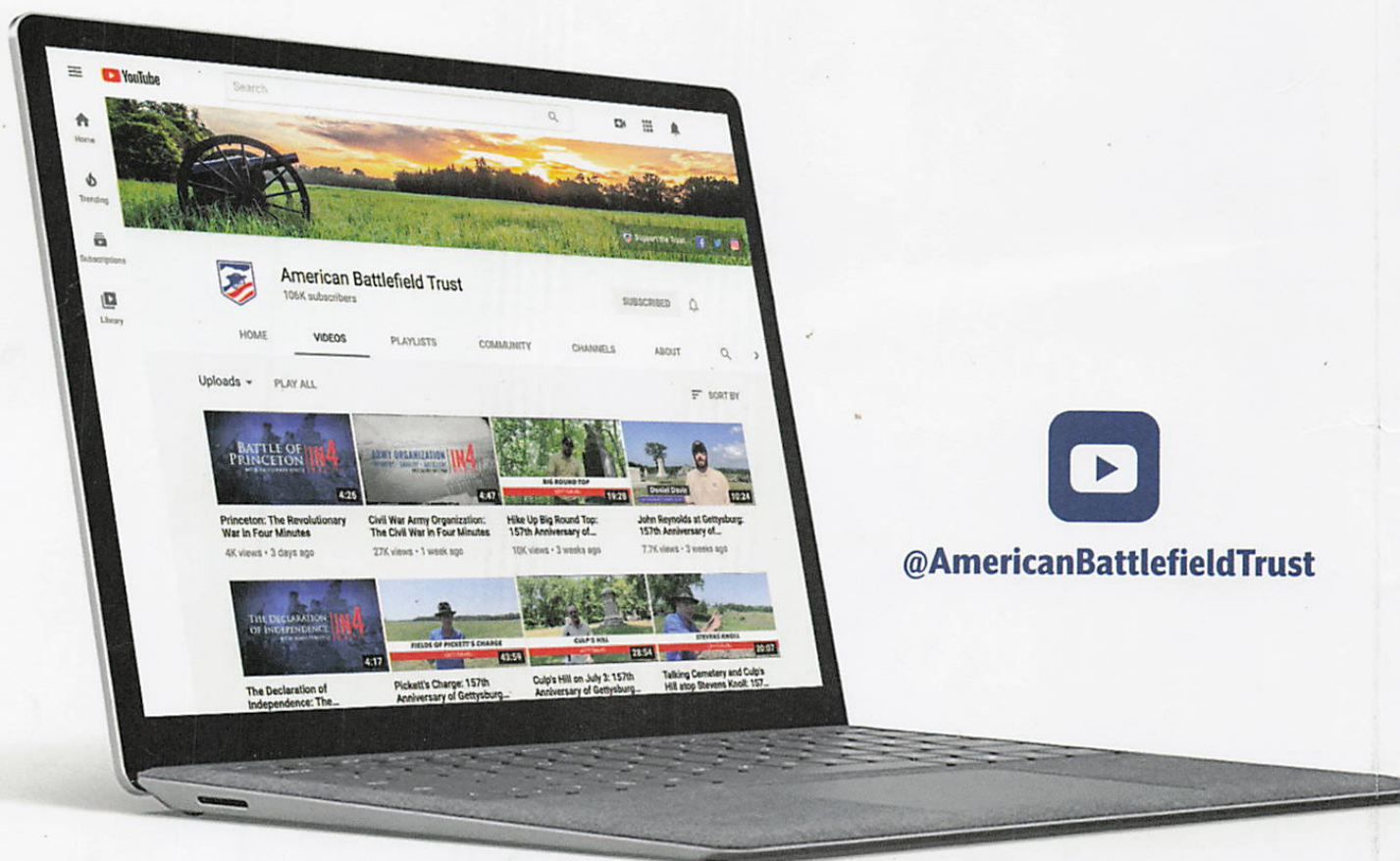
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